FEOHTAN

ISSUE #2

BANNERWAR
BLOOD TYRANT
FORBIDDEN TEMPLE
MORGENNEBEL
AZELSGARD
HAMERGILDE
SZARLEM
DER STURMER
EVILFEAST
LIKVANN
VAAL
MOROK
MACABRE OMEN
CULTUS

THIS, THE SECOND ISSUE OF FEOHTAN YOU HOLD IN YOUR HANDS WAS CREATED IN THE LATER DAYS OF SUMMER MMXVIII. THE CONTENT HEREIN WAS COLLECTED FROM VARIOUS INDIVIDUALS AT VARIOUS TIMES. SOME OF THESE INTERVIEWS WERE INTENDED FOR THE FIRST ZINE BUT DUE TO THE AMOUNT OF INTERVIEWS COMPILED I THOUGHT IT WORTHWHILE TO MAKE A SECOND ISSUE. A THIRD ZINE IS ALSO PLANNED FOR NEXT YEAR!

HAILS AND SALUTES TO THOSE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS ZINE.

SIEG ODER TOD
-S.

BANNERWAR has been an active band for many years now.
What year exactly did BANNERWAR form and what were the original ideas for the band?

As an idea they were in my mind and the first riffs written from '99/'00 as a 2-man band. Never had a drummer and the bassist Vorvoros came at '02. With that same line-up we released everything up to '06. As all of us had played and involved in RAC bands (some of us before and some of us after) it was pretty obvious the reasons of creating this band and what this band will be about. So it is done.

The Greek "scene" has always been interesting, diverse and full of atmosphere. From the early 90's with bands such as Rotting Christ, Varathron, Thou Art Lord & Necromantia etc. How do you feel things have changed since those times?

Unfortunately a lot. People change to be more precise. They grow up, problems come along and from the point you start to interact with the actual society you lose a lot of your "magic" and the "I breathe only to BM" devotion. 90ies mysticism has faded away and internet has a lot to.do with that. Some of them have opened to public and you see that this guy has nothing to do with something you had in mind. Those bands you mentioned are priceless diamonds, but some of them mostly only for their glorious past. They still might release some high quality stuff, but there is not the obscure magic in there of the old days. So if you are into BM only for the music its ok, but BM is not just music.

Looking back how do you feel about your previous outputs such as "To Honour Fatherland" and "Centuries of Heathen Might"

I think they are classics of radical and extreme BM. I am very proud that I was able to be a part of what BM should be. Even if with the same riffs, I had the opportunity to record them again, they would sound much more different than they are, but I would never do that because they mark a much more different and pure era, something that will not come back ever again.

We have all seen and heard about the unfortunate climate in Greece.
How does the future look for Greek society? What can the Greek people do to change this?

If you are talking about the economic crisis, yes this is very unfortunate, but it's not the worst. We have been in this economic place and even worse many times before in our history and we had overcome. Everything can be restored if there is Will of the Nation. The worst thing is that our Nation is dying so that's why I believe that we will not manage to overcome this or at least, not without a lots of blood. For many years now we are run by communists, letting millions and millions immigrants inside our country. And believe me they are survival types. They are not going to sit around and die, they will survive by any means over the weaker (=the Hellenic society). So the crime rates (from 10 years before for example) are beyond any imagination, TV is telling us that its ok, we can be replaced, for every Hellene that gets killed or committing suicide, our beloved government will bring hundreds more immigrants, so no problem. It was no more than matter of time before we lose lands too, like Macedonia and some of the Aegean by the Turks. Where there is not Nation there is no unity and no future at all. I don't think that Greek people can or will do anything to change this. Even if everyone votes for Golden Dawn (the only hope), I don't see there is a lot of space for radical changes. They won't let them. Only if all Europe understands that the time is now, we are in year Zero, and all the Nationalist movements must be full-supported to save whatever can still be saved. EUROPE AWAKE!!

Musically who were BANNERWAR's most prominent influences when you first formed the band?

Only Burzum to be honest, all the way!! That's why and the Burzum "War" cover on the demo. Some old Emperor, Graveland and Absurd elements appeared much later, but mostly in theoretical field. Musically I don't think we share something common with anything else. We created our own sound and aesthetics until the level that this was possible, because ok, it's BM, how unique you can be? Surely something may remind something else, but a level of uniqueness and diverse still exists.

What could (or would) define an ideal society? Are the Spartan virtues and values of old something we could live by as a life code in modern times?

Ideal society was perfectly described by Plato in his work "Republica" (Politeia). The basis of an ideal society is Justice, National Socialism, advanced cultural achievements and strict social cohesion. As long as in the governance level, this was described in every aspect by Aristotle whom he introduced us with the term of Aristocracy, meaning the best will rule, and not the later use of this word as we know it today. Seeing that much decay nowadays, yes maybe it's hard for someone to keep up with his values, but not impossible also. Of course we can live with those values, and of course we don't care about the rest of the world. Everything it's up to us really. The greatest way to live with honor in this world is to be what we pretend to be and for a man to conquer himself is the first and noblest of all victories.

There was roughly an 11 year gap between "Centuries of Heathen Might" & your last EP "Anthems of Blood & Soil" why was this?

Yes a long time. There are various reasons for this. Mostly because line-up changes and my engagement with other BM projects.

BANNERWAR's lyrics seem to focus on Mythology, War, Nationalism, and Folklore. What other influences do you have that are included in the lyrics of BANNERWAR?

Well indeed pretty much you covered everything! Anything that may express the eternal values of our Race, the Heroic Idea, and the lost forgotten Ethos that we need to re-built for our Race not only to survive, but to restore the old Glory, civilization and a hope for the future of Man. The past is the only teacher if you want to plan ahead your future. It also teaches you that nothing is impossible if you share the same blood with our ancestors and you can find endless wisdom if you are able to research inside the allegories of myths.

You have released an EP as your last output. Is it likely there will be a full length record in the near future?

We are working on it. There will be surely another full-length Bannerwar release, some tracks has been recorded already. I think if we don't finish it this year, at the beginning of next for sure. In any case, winter of '19 will be out. There is no hurry to offer something less than what we actually can. But that is the reason that this EP was released too. To mark on how about the new full release will sound like.

BANNERWAR has worked with a multitude of labels in the past.
Which label do you foresee releasing future BANNERWAR releases and why?

Yes in the past we worked with Battlefield/Drama records, Blazing prod, B&H Ukr/Patriot. Our first album was supposed to be released by a sub/BM label of Resistance Rec too, but that didn't happen even after of almost a year waiting. About labels I have no particular preferences, anything that stands along with the ideological part. Our most recent release was with DTB and everything was smooth and great, so maybe we will work again in the future.

Oswald Mosley once said: *Those who march with us will certainly face abuse, misunderstanding, bitter animosity, and possibly the ferocity of struggle and of danger. In return, we can only offer to them the deep belief that they are fighting that a great land may live.* For me these words are as profound and relevant today as they were over 60 years ago. Do you feel these words are still relevant today?

Sir Oswald Mosley is a British ideological diamond, a brave man who was never afraid to speak his opinion openly or to let any communists to hold him back. If not imprisoned and still in Parliament, the whole history of White Race would be different when Europe was fighting for its final survival. They blamed him for the results of irresponsible and betrayal actions of drunken Churchill.
That quotes sums up the whole idea of the Struggle in a few lines, sharp, direct and without elusions. Of course these words are relevant today, tomorrow and forever since the Struggle will never end until the Final Victory!

Ok, the interview is over...any final words?

14 of them!!!
Hail!!

Hails, when did FORBIDDEN TEMPLE first begin? And what was the initial aim for the band?

Hails! We started this project in early 2017.
The aim was to create the kind of black metal we are obsessed with.

Who are FORBIDDEN TEMPLE'S main influences?

The main influences are old school black metal in general, mostly early 90s.
Fullmoon and Veles are ofcourse very important for the existence of Forbidden Temple, but we didn't start out trying to copy what any of the old bands did. We just wanted our music to sound traditional and old-fashioned.

**"Demo II" is one of the better demos I have heard in recent years.
Can you explain how the demo was recorded and what is your opinion is of this demo at the present time?**

Thank you! The demo was recorded in a few sessions at the end of 2017.
We are satisfied with Demo II. The idea of how Forbidden Temple should sound etc, came to life on this demo.

On "Demo II" I can hear influences mainly from the old Polish hordes from the 90's such as Behemoth (old material, of-course) Graveland, Fullmoon, Infernum etc...How influential were these bands to FORBIDDEN TEMPLE?

Those bands were pure, raw, basic…and so is what we do.
All mentioned bands have epic keyboards, great riffs, great sound, fantastic artworks…aesthetics.
Very important!

**The last release was the split CD/LP with Ultima Thule.
For me this was a fantastic split which really displays how black metal SHOULD sound in 2018. I feel this release will be remembered in years to come. Do you care to shed some views on this split?**

Yes! Hails to Ultima Thule!
It was the first time we recorded with real drums, and it turned out good.We are very glad with the result of the split, Ultima Thule and Forbidden Temple are a perfect match for a split.We immortalised an honest ancient style…which is often difficult to find nowadays.
I guess if you see both covers and inlays, you know what to expect; pure old school black metal far away from all current trends.

What devices do you use to record with FORBIDDEN TEMPLE? Old analog equipment? Or digital?

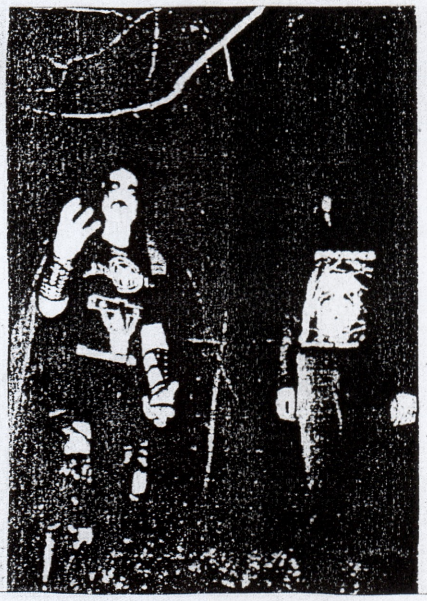
Old analog equipment is the only way! Our recordings happen with an old Tascam device, and we'll keep using that one as long as possible, until it breaks down. For us analogue equipment is the only way to go: it's cheap, easy to use and if you know what you're doing, it sounds great.

You have worked with a few good labels such as New Era & Medieval Prophecy. Will you work with both labels again in future?

Our collaboration with mentioned labels went good! We've known the people behind it for a long time, so that helps for a good understanding.
Yes.

Can you explain to me about your lyrical direction with FORBIDDEN TEMPLE?

Our lyrics are about paganism, satanism, witchcraft, death,…
First comes the music, later the lyrics, the lyrics depends on the atmosphere that was created in a song.



The internet is a fantastic tool for communication and the noteworthy ease of buying records and merchandise. With that comes a lot of other problems like the PC sub humans and record flippers and "scene queens" Who should never have found this art. (Also a few other issues at hand too) Do you feel the internet to be more of a useful tool or a burden?

We make this music mostly for ourselves and we don't really care who else listens to it. As for the YouTube raw black metalheads, you can always ignore them if you want. It's a waste of time and energy worrying about it.

Which bands in today's "scene" do you find interesting and show support to?

The list is endless, but to name a few: Blood Tyrant etc from NL, Portugese bands and circles, Witchcraft from FI, Walghinge from BE,…

Any future plans for FORBIDDEN TEMPLE?

A new release is being recorded and in progress and more news will follow in the near future.

The last words are yours....
It was a pleasure to have an interview with you.

AZELSGARD

Hails Loki, when did AZELSGARD begin and what were your original ideas and intentions for AZELSGARD?

In the Dark and Sodomy! The true beginning of **AZELSGARD** dates back to the early 90s; when black metal stood for, first and foremost, acts and music was, basically, of secondary importance. Around 1992, I got an old Soviet-made guitar from my parents and, in result, I decided (like everybody else back then, I suppose!) to start playing metal, LOL! I began to work on my initial, simple riffs; nothing serious really. I had been jamming/rehearsing like that until 1995 when I finally brought forth two, brand-new tracks (**Wojna Bez Konca, Wilczy Hak**) and 50% of **Swiatynia Pelni Ksiezyca**. At the time, I had an opportunity to rehearse with a session drummer in the basement that belonged to blasphemous fellows of **THUNDER**. Those guys were so nice they let us use their equipment. The temporary band name was **WALDORT** but it all stopped right there. We rehearsed just for fun, we had no plans to record anything. To be frank with you, my zine had/has always been my priority so when **THUNDER** (and us) lost their rehearsal place I somehow quit playing music until 2006. Ideas and intentions? Well, very same - right from the very beginning. They present my dark nature, wrath and hatred embedded deep in myself for whole the world around me. Glorification of war, violence, evil, darkness and Arian hegemony. This sort of stuff. My inspirations haven't changed: black forces of nature, winter, dark woods and caves, impassable mountain ranges, dark lakes and swamps, pagan wilderness. I am very much into the dark side of paganism, personification of evil (differently depicted in various Aryan cultures). Grim, desolate places devoid of people, full of magic and omnipotent presence of primordial gods.

The old Polish scene has had some fantastic and highly memorable records. Which 5 would you define to be the best of them from the 90's?

Yes, you're right. The old Polish scene (including black metal bands) ruled, simples. Only five? Hell, I will provide at least ten! **PANDEMONIUM Devilri, INFERNUM Taur-Nu-Fuin, VELES Triumph of the Pagan Beliefs, GRAVELAND Carpathian Wolves, FULLMOON Uhited Aryan Evil, ABS CONDITUS Noc długich noży, LEGION/PERUNWIT split'95, BUSTUM Funeral christ, NORTH As My Kingdom Rises, MYSTERIES** - all!!! Of course, there are more, I am sure another week I could come up with different bands, really. Anyhow, I have always been heavily influenced by those bands/stuff. And I can still associate particular memories, awesome I would add, with each of these recordings.

AZELSGARD has a totally old-school attitude; never shying away from being rebellious, politically incorrect etc... How do you feel when you see a lot of the bands nowadays apologizing for their past beliefs?

It was supposed to be like this from the very beginning to the very end. **AZELSGARD** stands for my beliefs, my approach to the underground, metal, the whole world and so on. So, this is what can be seen/heard.
Do you mean **GRAVELAND**? All I'm feeling now, well, is hatred, shame, embarrassment and contempt. For fuck's sake, black metal is supposed, theoretically and practically, to stand against the whole world. This is the music of darkness and evil, it is antisocial and unconventional. What is, damn it, happening to this music now, after all those years? Black metal is becoming popular music for fucking hipsters, faggots and leftist scum who ought to be scared of it, instead of listening to it and attending metal music live shows. I have always claimed and I always will that the bands who're presently renouncing their old beliefs (whatever these might be) or, even worse, being sorry for what they've claimed/said in the past are just a bunch of fucking rock stars who want to make a career in show business. Can't be denied, no matter what. Black metal means underground, the opposite of mainstream. These who betray our values, well, they deny their past too since they want to become part of this mainstream. Fuck them! Fuck **GRAVELAND**.

What are your opinions of social networking going hand in hand with black metal?

I have always been against it, to tell you the truth. Black metal, as an anti-social genre, is apparently feeling at home on various social networking platforms. This is absurd, don't you agree. This is happening in accordance with this rule I think: other people are on FB so I need to/should be on FB too. What the fuck…

Does it mean I got to be like others are? If everyone has a hipster-like beard does it mean I need to have a beard like this too? If everyone is a faggot, does it imply I am going to be a faggot too? Fucking hell. Black metal stands for anti-trend or is it following trends and currents fashions for fuck's sake? Sure, I can still understand that distros/labels are on FB though. Well, as, allegedly, the underground is now based on FB (or the like) so there is a need to reach there, one way or another. I can understand that. But I just don't get musicians who share with their fans all possible bullshit there is to talk about. What they've eaten for breakfast, when they poo, where they spend their holidays or who they've married in church. Or what Santa Claus brought them for Christmas, ha-ha. My underground means snail mail, hard copy zines, tapes, vinyl records, tape/cd/zine trading, gigs as well as meeting up with my friends (in person, not over internet). This kind of underground is still alive despite the fact many people think otherwise.

Are there many bands right now that you support or have interest in?

Well, there is a lot of interesting bands, indeed. From Poland I do like/support: **DARK FURY, SELBSTMORD, OHTAR, ANTISEMITEX, WAR 88, EVILFEAST, REVENGE, NECROSTRIGIS, SZARY WILK, CRIPPLING MADNESS, SZRON, PENTAGAMMADION/AHNENERBE, SUNWHEEL/KATAXU, PLAGA, MOLOCH LETALIS, MARTWA AURA, ABHORRENT FUNERAL, INCINERATOR, ARMAGH, CULTES DES GHOULES, SATANIC MIGHT**…and some more for sure. Foreign bands: **SIEGE COLUMN, DEEP SPACE SORCERER, JAWS OF HADES, DAMNATION LUST, FESTUNG, CHAIN, BLACK VIPER, SOLAR MASS, HRID, PHLEGEIN, SHIYUN, ETERNUM, BLOOD STRONGHOLD, THE WANDERER, TEMPLE NIGHTSIDE, HELLBRINGER, IMMORTAL WAR, MORBID RITES, TERROR THRONE, DREADFUL RELIC, GRANSKOG, CHATEU NOIR, MALSAINT, ABOMINABLOOD, TORONTO, SANGUINARY MISANTHROPIA, CAULDRON**…plenty of new bands every week, man. Plus, some old timers: **DER STURMER, WODULF, SATANIC WARMASTER, CLANDESTINE BLAZE, BAPTISM, WARLOGHE, ABSURD, SACRIFICIA MORTUORUM, PALE MIST, SPEAR OF LONGINUS, EVIL, DETHRONED CHRIST**…hope that's enough. And I want to say "fuck off" to a rip off guy of **Terror Propaganda**. Beware of this thief!

You have worked with great labels so far... Is Forestkult still an active label of yours?

Yes! And I would love to say hello and thank you to a number of labels and distros: **Flagellum Haereticorum Rex, Totenkopf Propaganda/Frost and Fire, Breath of Pestilence Prod., Putrid Cult Prod., Lower Silesian Stronghold, Strigoi Rec., Witches Sabbath Rex, Northern Heritage, Hammer of Hate, Hammer of Damnation**. Hail and Kill! Yes, **Forestkult** is still alive and kicking. Some time ago me and **LSS** released **DARK FURY Carnivore** ep (on tape). We have some future plans, nothing specific though, as of now. Time will tell.

Europe is becoming something almost unrecognizable.... What do you think the future will bring for white Europeans?

What is going on in Western Europe now is both tragedy and nightmare which have become reality. Methinks, Western Europe has surrounded without fighting back, really. Those countries ceded their ground to Allah`s dogs who breed like rabbits and demand their "rights"! I am really sorry for you that you are located in the UK and have to deal with all this filth around you on a daily basis. I can't just imagine living next to Muslims, black or yellow people. Wouldn't be able to work with such guys either. I can't just see myself shopping/meeting people like these every day. I do hope I will never have to witness/experience this. The future of Europeans (btw, are there any non-white Europeans over here? Seems like you got PC`ed too, huh!) looks a bit…dark! There is no other way but a racial/religious war to begin. It is either us or them. No other solution. You are aware of this, right. The Western governments have been surrounding to every possible demands of non-Europeans. And these non-Europeans want more and more. Their demands will never end, will never stop. Since they have been waging their holy war against us since the seventh century, don't you agree? They want the whole world to play along with their fucked-up religion and values. There is only one question that needs to be answered: are Europeans going to say yes to those demands and in result lose their civilisation or they will say no and defend the values their forefathers have been fighting for, for ages? I am sure all our brave and gallant European forefathers are rolling in their graves and crying seeing how their descendants have no balls to fight back. English, French and Teutonic knights conquered Jerusalem, fought against the Muslim world on land and in the sea. And never moved back! Hell, their present kin will clear off when they notice approaching all these shitty towelheads molesting their women; in their own countries! Hard to understand, really. As the old saying goes: if you want peace, prepare for war. There is no other way. Never has and never will.

AZELSGARD has released only a handful of releases over the years you have been actively recording. Why so little? Or has there been other important things that have made AZELSGARD a little more sporadic?

Yes, you're right. There are three reasons for that. First off, I have never had any professional recording equipment or, indeed, a decent electric guitar either. Therefore, I have always recorded all my stuff using my buddies` equipment and help. To be frank with you, I have no idea whatsoever about recording *per se*, mixing etc. I am not going to learn how to do it, no way. Second, I don't feel like composing or writing music at all. All I need is the right atmosphere and state of mind. You know, this clinical process of writing new stuff will never result in good songs. And last but not least, I see no reason for recording and releasing new stuff every year or so; or worse, twice or thrice a year. I am not a musician; my intention is not to make a career in the underground. I play music whenever I feel like. I record when I can do so. And release when the right time comes. Plain and simple. Not too much, that's true, but I think that true, underground black metal isn't for everyone, huh? Die-hard fans will get **AZELSGARD**`s stuff, I am sure of it. All this leftist scum and fucking hipsters - fuck off and stay away from my music.

Have you played live with AZELSGARD? If not, is it something you would like to do?

No. Never have I. Well, anyhow, I have recently talked to **Cadaveris** from **MARTWA AURA** about it and, to tell you the truth, I am thinking about it now. Sure, that'd be awesome to play live a bit! And deliver some pure fucking mayhem on stage! Time will tell if it works out.

It has been some years since your last output. Is there any new AZELSGARD releases coming in the near future?

Yeah, that's correct. In 2017, however, **Totenkopf Propaganda** unleashed the **Confraternity of Lawlessness** mcd (limited to 500 copies). I had that stuff out on tape too (66 promo copies). Since **Commando Wolf** wanted to release this recording on cd, well, I said: why not? Yes, I am going to record some new songs too as I have already worked on these and have their preliminary ideas ready. I would love to get them done this year but, for the life of me, I don't know where the tabs are. LOL. Damn, I can't remember the riffs now so I do need those. When I find them, I will start recording, yes. If I don't, well, fuck that.

The last words are yours...

Thank you very much for your interest. I am really excited to see you run a real, hard-copy kind of zine. This is the very essence of real underground. **AZELSGARD** ain`t dead - we are the new beginning! The end is on the cross! Fuck Islam and its worshippers. Death comes from the woods!

Aryan Art / Furor - Ще позволим ли да погребат родината ни?/ Return to the Battleland - Split CD - Dark Hidden Productions

This split CD I have had for many years now. It's always been a great example (at-least in my mind) of a much underrated black metal. Aryan Art for example were one of the finer bands in the 2000's who truly bring something worthwhile to the table amidst the clones and hipsters than now infest the "scene" Their sound always invoking something which resonated within me personally. Furor were (and still are) pretty much an unknown project from Argentina who seemed to work a few excellent tracks alongside Aryan Art. Anyway, onward with the review....
Firstly we are greeted by the Aryan Art tracks with the song "Пробуждане" (Awakening) which is a very short-lived introduction with a militant snare drum roll and horns. The second song "Войнът на спасението" (The Warrior of Salvation) instantly invokes an ancient atmosphere. The crazed vocals of Alexander come to the fore and bring out the passion this song needed to pretty much make the whole composition perfect. For the most part Aryan Art works much as the BBH bands from Russia did (or do?) the composition is chaotic, feral, raw YET very ethereal, obscured and somewhat dreamlike.
The track alternates between a few very atmospheric riffs which again seem to bond perfectly. A great opening track for this split! Track three "Червена паплач безродна" (Red Patter) opens with a mid-paced riff and drumbeat which has a very interesting atmosphere. There seems to be a sorrowful element to the riffs and vocal patterns. The song works as a fantastic track which displays an aura of "longing" (or at-least it seems that way to me) The title seems a little obscure and I'm not 100% sure as to what the meaning might be but the track seems to delve into various emotions.
Track four "Стадото наречено български народ" (The Herd Called Bulgarian People) seems lyrically as an assault on the modern man. The track begins frantically which invokes a feeling of uttermost hate. It is apparent here that Alexander aims at attacking the modern people of Bulgaria who have disregarded their culture, history and folk for degenerate culture, drugs, and so-forth. Clearly these lyrics tell a story of a dying spiritual being. Track five "Бяло, зелено, червено" (White, Green, Red) begins once more with a blast beat and a very atmospheric riff. Lyrically it seems there's a very dualistic approach to this track. In one sentence Alexander mentions about the greatness of "what was" and in the next a more sombre reflection of the modern man rejecting ancient values. There's a nihilistic theme in a lot of the lyrical works in these tracks which actually makes sense considering how a lot of Europeans have abandoned their traditions and their pride in favour of other worthless nonsense spoon-fed to the brainwashed masses. Track six "Послушай сърцето си!" (Follow your Heart!) Once again has a very sombre riff which invokes the feeling of collapse and ruin. The lyrics again focus around the loss of all things sacred and worthwhile. "Follow your Heart" speaks more of looking into oneself to find a way to keep the spirit of the past alive. Musically the track alternates around a few very strong and stirring riffs which really bring to mind the old legends such as Moonblood or Burzum.

The next four tracks that feature on the disc are from Furor.
Track one features the track "Return to the Battleland" which opens with a blast beat and simple riff. The mix is quite decent, a little flat but fitting for the overall atmosphere. The vocals are a little buried in the mix but certainly sound passionate. The riffs present (much like AA) Seem to gel nicely together. Overall it's a nice start from Furor. The next track "Spreading the Terror" one again begins with a blast beat and simple riff. This time there's more a hateful energy to the track. The vocals almost "croaked" The only problem facing Furor seems to be a slight lack of variation in the riffs and therefore the flow. There's definitely an aura of the Blazebirth Hall bands from Russia. Some of the ideas from Furor seem a little linear (The spirit is there) but I feel some of the ideas fall a little short and the songs do not really deliver enough and the composition becomes a little "flat". The next track "Blood in the Forest" opens with a slower pace...this is just what was needed for Furor and just at the right time too!! The riff this time delivers a totally different set of emotions and really brings out a whole new approach. Instantly I'm reminded of Burzum (again!!) Maybe even elements of Judas Iscariot (later era) in there too the track soon after descends back into the blast beat. Soon after (perfect timing) the track then goes back into the first riff section with the slower beat. By far the best song that Furor has created on this CD so far! There's a nice flow to this track that works perfectly at utilising the few riffs very well. The final track "The Scream of the Eagle" starts with a blast beat once again. The riff is impressive (if simple) but seems to set the tone perfectly. Unfortunately though Furor does come across as rather linear and the tracks (while displaying decent riffs) fall a little short with variation.

Mooncitadel - As Nightwinds Embraced and the Shadows Caressed - Cassette - DTB.

Mooncitadel is a project of ex Empire of Tharaphita member Stormheit who is also active on bass for Goatmoon plus a few other projects.
Mooncitadel is a continuation of Empire of Tharaphita (for some reason) Stormheit decided to change the name. For me there is a slight difference in the sound but both names worked for the project as a whole. The first track "Dimensional Key as the Sword of Stars" begins with a blast beat and very interesting riff. Instantly this reminds me of the older Nocternity material. The track instantly invokes the feeling of a pagan warrior roaming amidst the forest beneath the night sky with sword in hand. There's a MASSIVE ethereal quality to this track, the atmosphere is fantastic and the riffs are well performed and delivered perfectly to capture the right sound. What a fantastic start to this demo.
Track two "Lord of the Moonrealm" starts with a great riff that reminds me somewhat of "In the Nightside Eclipse" by Emperor. The sound is very strong and the atmosphere is very nocturnal and ethereal. The 2nd riff here has a very folk-esq "groove" which reminds me of the old Isengard records from Fenriz. The composition here is truly fantastic and really works perfectly with the atmosphere, mix and overall idea that Stormheit seems to have had in mind. The riffs are definitely a talking point...this isn't the usual power chord stuff (not that there's anything wrong with that) but there's a little more melody to the playing where Stormheit is using a higher scale including solos and making the leads work perfectly to create something sonically superb. Track three "When Thousand Winters Bury My Heart" starts fantastically. Again, going back to the 2nd wave Norwegian black metal this time with influences (at-least to my ear) from Dimmu Borgir (For all Tid/Stormblast era) maybe some Summoning, Limbonic Art and again Emperor working as influences. Once more, the composition here is fantastic and the riffs just mould perfectly with the drumming. The vocals work perfectly too in the mix ...telling great tales of winter, darkness and folklore. The last track "The Earl of Nightfall" really brings the demo to a fantastic closer with a song that could easily have been lifted from "In the Nightside Eclipse" by Emperor. Albeit, this isn't a clone whatsoever but the influence is certainly there.
There's certainly a medieval atmosphere on this demo. Many try to invoke the dark ages on records but sometimes fail. It seems Mooncitadel have got it right here. Along with the Aryan Forest demo this is the most impressive release to come out of Finland in a long time.
Superb demo that certainly deserves CD treatment to secure that this gem can be preserved properly.

Azelsgard - Luciferian Supreme Darkness - Cassette - Forestkult

Azelsgard are a long running project from Poland who have always been among the few bands who still seem to uphold a completely non-PC approach to their sound, attitude and overall aesthetics. The main man Loki is an enthusiast of underground attitude and propaganda; this shines through with Azelsgard absolutely. "Luciferian Supreme Darkness" was released back in 2012 and since then Azelsgard has been quiet and seems to on hiatus (of such) hopefully a return to form will come this year or next for Azelsgard. Track one "Luciferian Supreme Darkness"(introritual) sets the sound for what is to come from Azelsgard. A low droning keyboard riff overlapped by a beating war drum instantly brings to mind an obscure ritual in the forest prior to battle. These sounds like a track Veles forgot to make on "Hateful Black Metal" bizarre and intense build up for sure. Track two "Nieograniczona lodowata nienawiść" (Unlimited Ice Cold Hatred) Starts with a blast beat and a ferocious tremolo riff. The vocals bringing to mind other crazed Polish warriors such as Wolfwampyr, Leinad and even Blasphemous. THIS is black metal without concern for trends or what fits "in" truly maniacal, ferocious and obscure music. Track three "Wilki Azelsgardu" (Azelsgard Wolves) then opens with a great riff over a double bass drum part. Again, this reminds me of how black metal used to sound, excellent!! Loki's vocals once more are crazed and ferocious. Never letting up or lacking aggression.
Track four "Odwieczne zło z otchłani podlaskich lasów" (Eternal evil from the abyss of Podlasie forests) opens with a more mid paced riff and drum beat. The riff is simple but works just perfectly. Again, Azelsgard are not letting the moss grow beneath them and the song works around a few riffs and then comes to an end. A future full length would be totally welcomed from Azelsgard as these demos are just displaying that black metal is NOT dead.

When did the ideas for SZARLEM first come alive for you? and what (if any) were the plans for SZARLEM?

Like with many of my musical projects it started with some riff ideas which did not really fit with anything I already have going. The intention was to record a new FRONT BEAST demo, but since the end result turned out way more lo-fi than the direction I had in mind for FRONT BEAST at the time, I decided to create a new entity and go into the opposite way for future recordings. That was in 2005 if I remember correctly…

SZARLEM seems to take a lot of inspiration from the old polish bands from the 90's. Who would you say were (or are) the biggest influences on SZARLEM's sound?

Yes, definitely. I love that style… I always felt that no new bands did sound like they did… not even polish ones… That´s a sad thing in the first place, that bands coming out of a country which managed to establish some kind of "signature sound" always try to sound like bands from norway… be it brazil or poland in this case. Stick to your roots and play what´s in your blood. I also don´t want a german thrash band to sound like a bay area one… hell, I don´t even want any band to sound like that, ha ha. Now some smart ass could say why I try to sound polish when im german, ha ha… But in my opinion there was never really a german black metal sound, so im allowed to sound like something else ! Anyway, to drop some names for influences, GRAVELAND "in the glare of burning churches" in particular, not so much into anything else Rob did, as well as VELES "Black hateful metal" and SACRILEGIUM "Wicher" + a lot of early BATHORY is basically everything that it needs to describe the SZARLEM sound.

What is the current state of the German Black Metal "scene"?
And which bands from the past inspired you to begin your journey?

I don´t follow the black metal scene here anymore. Looks like all the guys from my generation are gone for good or play different kinds of metal now… and it´s just 20 year olds starting bands and dissappearing 5 years later…
Maybe I sound too negative here, but that´s the impression I have… The best ever german black metal band was KATHARSIS. The last BILSKIRNIR album is nearly 10 years old now, only old stuff get´s re-released… The only nowadays german bands which catched my attention are DRENGSKAPUR/RIMRUNA from Berlin and MOURNFUL WINTER. Oh, and I saw PARAGON BELIAL live some time ago, which was a great surprise… they are an old band….

How do you feel about social media? Do you believe Black Metal (or Underground music) should be "acceptable" on these platforms?

Well… I think I have a mixed opinion about this. I think it´s OK for most metal to spread the word about their bands through these channels. They are great tools to notify people about live gigs for example… But for BLACK METAL I feel a bit different… I come from the zine, flyer, tape trading days… Back then the feeling about all of this was a lot more exciting because you could not get ahold of everything in 2 minutes, also there was not such an overload of impressions. You had more time to concentrate on the few things you got and learned to appreciate them even more. And I think with BLACK METAL this is a mandatory thing, you need TIME and the right mood to really get a feeling for what you are listening there… I must admit even myself I have a hard time to focus on that nowadays. But I know times when this was different to me, could also be because I was younger, more hungry and yes, had more time on my hands to get into all of this. Anyway, there is no social media for SZARLEM, not because I feel i´m to cool for it, but I keep this to the projects I think it´s more necessary to use it. With SZARLEM I just don´t see the point…

Have you considered having a full lineup for SZARLEM? Or does working alone suit you more?

No, absolutely not. Since im not doing anything on a regular basis … I had a full line up for FRONT BEAST to do some live shows, but this was already way more stress than I wanted. And I did not even have much since the other guys did rehearse the songs for themselves and I just came by for a rehearsal or 2 just doing vocals, ha ha… So the work was with them… Anyway… more people more problems, with SZARLEM I can handle everything myself to my own satisfaction, so no need to involve anyone else…

I know you run the label DEATHSTRIKE RECORDS. How has the label been throughout the years to run? What does the future hold for DEATHSTRIKE?

The label is basically dead, I don't have the desire or patience anymore to put time into it. Also everything has gone to shit, people are just no buying anything anymore which is not hyped. Even trading with other labels has become really ridiculous…

**"Black Metal Battle Hymns" was your last record.
What were the overall opinion from fans of SZARLEM?**

I don't really know… did not get much feedback from anyone about it. I personally like the first album a little bit better. When I will do another album I will definitely go more back to the sound of the first album.

What inspires you to write lyrics for SZARLEM? It looks like you have covered multiple topics in the past concerning Battles, Hatred, Darkness etc.…

Writing lyrics is more a pain in the ass to me than anything else to be honest… Once in a while I have an idea and then I sit down and write, but I much prefer to work on music than on lyrics. For the 2nd SZARLEM album I did use a trick… I did read somewhere that the german punk band SLIME never really wrote lyrics themselves, they always had a friend doing the lyrics for them and on one album they just used poems from a 19th century anarchist and tailored them to their songs… So I figured I can look up for poems and writings about ancient battles and just use them… worked just fine…most effective idea I ever had !

SZARLEM sounds (to me at-least) somewhat improvised, How do you record for SZARLEM? What techniques/equipment do you use?

I did improvise the drum tracks most of the time… I recorded them before I had any riffs or anything else… Sometimes there was a riff or two...
I just have rough ideas in my head on how I want the songs to be and record until I have a good variation of drum tracks ready to work with. Then I sit down and compose the music over the drum tracks. From this point on only some of the vocals are improvised. I usually do one take for to record vocals … I don´t even check much how the lyrics fit, just try to catch the mood and get a good take. For the future I want to change this workflow because I want to compose the music first and just will record drums when the songs are more or less written. For to record I used pretty much everything so far, from a analogue TASCAM 8 track over a digital 8 track to a cellphone... For ANGEL OF DAMNATION I recorded drums with a VHS Video Camera once… Can´t say that was the smartest move, but that´s what I had in the time.

Have you considered performing live with SZARLEM?

No, absolutely not… With FRONT BEAST I always said no, but left the possibility open and in the end it happened, but with SZARLEM I can safely say it will never happen.

Are there many plans for future releases and recordings from SZARLEM?

As you may know I finished a song for a split 7" with WOLVES EYES but so far there are no plans to anything new at the moment. My focus is to finish the next NOCTURNAL album and the 2nd THE FOG album. After that I guess I will be in the mood again for something more lo-fi

The last words are yours ...

The obvious thanks for the interview… was officially the first SZARLEM interview I did…

Evilfeast

EVILFEAST's first release was "Thy Abhorrence Emerging" how has EVILFEAST changed since then? Do you have a specific EVILFEAST release you feel most connected to?

Evilfeast is the same project as it was back in the "Thy Abhorrent..." times, yet it has changed significantly. Sounds contradictory, but when describing and recapitulating the Evilfeast history, I always say that back then, at the end of 90s I entered the particular path, and after these years I am still treading the same one, however much further and deeper into cold darkness it leads to. During that journey I explored many dimensions, broaden my perspectives, found new sources of knowledge and inspiration... But never abandoned the once chosen way. It's simple: Development and self-improvement doesn't equal drastic changes and constant skipping between various dimensions (what in practice usually comes down to going with the flow of general tendencies, fashion etc.). Fidelity and intransigence doesn't equal stagnation and self-restraint. That's the case of Evilfeast. As to my releases - I always feel most connected to the newest one, I guess that's natural. Besides, I value all of them, as the milestones on my journey, still in retrospect I see with every of them both glorious aspects, as well as some deficiencies. There's always a space for improvement.

When did you first hear or become interested in Black Metal? Which element of Black Metal was the most appealing?

It was around 1996-97 probably, as a very young kid. There was no such particular element, Black Metal was appealing as the whole. That was the point, every element matched - music, lyrics, attitude, concepts, visual side... Everything was building totally dark and mystic entirety. Looking back I may say that I've always been a dark nature, what initially manifested in the ways adequate to my age, that is quite shallow and ignorant. Black Metal was probably the factor that elicited my inner dark spheres, gave them conscious form, put into ideas something that I had barely instinctively felt before.

The last release from EVILFEAST was the promo tape in 2015 which Werewolf Promotion released. What is next to come from EVILFEAST?

As you probably know, at the moment the last release of Evilfeast is the fifth album "Elegies of the Stellar Wind", released by Eisenwald in December of 2017. It took long, but I've finally completed it. Expect nothing more and nothing less than Evilfeast, 67 minutes of pure hatred and magic.

EVILFEAST for me captures that 90's essence...which bands/projects do you find inspired you most? Or are there other aspects/elements which stand above the musical inspiration?

I don't deny musical inspiration from other hordes, there were some most influential for the forming of Evilfeast style, such as early: Satyricon, Emperor, Troll, Ancient Rites, Godkiller, Infernum, Graveland and others... Still, Evilfeast for me is not any kind of "retro" project. I know many people praise it for capturing the 90's essence, perhaps I should be proud of it, but nevertheless I hate all those "old-school", "second wave" etc. descriptions. I realize they're helpful to get the general picture of the band, still I completely don't consider Evilfeast in the context of these terms. In my deepest conviction, true Black Metal is beyond time. The art I create is just my own vision of Black Metal, the most perfect form of expression, not any kind of "nostalgic return", "bringing back the 90's" or other crap like that. I don't have to return anywhere, as I just keep continuing what I started at the Evilfeast beginning. And for me this form of art is still as fresh, timely, potent and valid as it was back then.

Stepping away from EVILFEAST for this question... What (if any) news do you have concerning RAVENMOON SANCTUARY? I know Wened has involvement in lots of projects so I would imagine time is sometimes not as easy to delegate to numerous projects for him.

I have no idea what is happening recently with Ravenmoon..., I'm in more or less permanent contact with Wened, but since the releasing of "Winter Desolation of Death" I haven't heard anything about any plans. Although I consider myself a regular member of RMS, this is mainly the creation of Wened and Colder, so all I can say is that if some day they prepare some new stuff and decide to summon me to add some melancholic touch to it, I'll be ready.

What is your opinion of Facebook and other forms of social media?
What also is your opinion of modern black metal?

You can guess what my attitude to facebook is by searching such Evilfeast official page in the net. You won't find it, now and ever. I hate this social crap, which brings out some of the worst features of humans - need for acceptance, posturing, artificiality, creating alternate personality that has little in common with the real one, just to show off before as many people as possible. Maybe I thought that at least Black Metal movement would be more resistant against this modern social plagues, but no - they've just absorbed it en masse. Perhaps I should be sad or disappointed about it, but over the years I've learned, that so called "Black Metal scene" is - despite self-conviction - basically a product of society - few valuable individuals and a mob with all the features of society, greedy for a sense of belonging, going with the flow, creating own "mainstreams" and tending to fit to them. Most bands seem not to bother that this whole facebook is a gate allowing simply everyone, both worthy and unworthy, to obtain access to something they should have never met. I realize that in the present times of unlimited information flow it probably couldn't be avoided anyway, but for me it does matter that I myself don't set my hand to "promoting" Evilfeast this way. I guess above I've also answered to the question about my opinion of modern Black Metal in general, to sum it up - "quantity over quality" is the shortest and most accurate description.

What are your views on the current Polish "scene"? Are there many bands or projects you hold in high regard?

Not much positive I can say I'm afraid. The polish scene is generally a shitty mess according to me. Shitty and trendy. There are only a few individuals I respect, few bands that at least draw my attention (and rather none of the commonly considered the "top" among them), and literally none that would be deeply convincing for me in every aspect, that I could feel close and related with. Can't help it, but I cannot recall a single one like that.

Have you any preference for a label concerning future EVILFEAST material?
I see you have worked with a few different labels in the past.

Yes, I've always worked with various labels, never attached to only one. Don't know why, maybe I just find it more interesting. Of course I'm interested only in cooperation with honest underground Black Metal labels, reputable, respectable and respecting themselves, that means inter alia not releasing hundreds of worthless / mediocre stuff, but concentrating on less but of higher quality. I guess that's one of the main things I consider when choose the labels.

Is there any future for your past label Funeral Sound productions?

Funeral Sound is not a "past" label, although it may never again release anything. Funeral Sound is existent and nonexistent at the same time. By that I mean its existence is not constant, I just release something when I want to, and revive the FSP sign when it's needed. Till now it's been mainly for the project of my comrade - Revenge, but I don't exclude something else, like it was in the past with Aetheres album. At the moment I have no plans for the future releases, but it can change even tomorrow.

What are the most common lyrical themes for EVILFEAST? Maybe you can explain how you write lyrics and what are the most inspiring things for your lyric writing?

It's a huge question, so I have to cut it short: The lyrics are my own dark poetry, I don't restrict its subject in any way. The great source of the lyrical content are my inner dark spheres - hatred, sorrow, wrath, nostalgia, many other feelings, visions, reflections of my journeys, sometimes ephemeral states of mind, which I try to transform into words. Another significant part is of more ideological / philosophical kind, and based on my considerations on such notions as death, eternity, astralism, the past, heritage, destiny, wisdom, transcendence... always in my own personal, that is very grim approach. The triad of concepts "Tradition - Heritage - Destiny" can be a key to comprehend Evilfeast lyrics especially on the last two albums: I express there specifically conceived paganism and national romanticism, regaining might & wisdom from the nature & soil, preserving the consciousness of the cultural, national and racial heritage as the source of strength taken from the deepest roots for the future acts. Creating own dark path, overcoming human limitations, reaching the stars, endless quest against stagnation and degeneration... I could spend hours talking about the lyrics, but enough for now. Instead I suggest everyone interested to delve into this unholy poetry on their own.

I hear Poland has been somewhat defiant concerning the current immigration crisis (Hail to that) what do you think will be the future for Europe?

With this so called "immigration crisis" Europe is standing before the critical thread for its identity, heritage, roots, and in further perspective probably the very existence. Yet European "elite" seems to be quite helpless in the face of it, so I would rather predict proceeding collapse and fall. This process is quite advanced already in many Western European countries, relatively less advanced in the Eastern part. The polish government tends to maintain this status quo, mainly due to purely cynical and populist reasons, they also give it a "deeper" background speaking of defending national identity, which for them is of course none other than catholic. The society seems to support this policy to a large extent, mostly driven by primitive, vulgar fear of mob fed with scary stereotypes by politicians, who by that pursue their goals and strengthen authority. Objectively this whole situation is conducive to maintaining the current state when it comes to the (relatively small) number of immigrants in Poland. I could say it's basically a good thing, although I probably hate most of the contemporary Polish people equally, so I'm not sure if it matters very much at all. Anyway don't expect me to praise the government and the society, as their motivations are something that I mostly can only despise. The ancestral pride and spirituality is dead among the contemporary people, so I got rid of the daydreams of a "better future" long ago, and don't give a damn about contemporary people, just care of preserving certain values in me.

Any last words?

Feel the terrifying dark aura that appears with "Elegies of the Stellar Wind". Thank you for the interview.

Finnentum - Finnentum - 7''- Deviant Records

Finnentum is a project of Shatraug's a few years back. (Shatraug should be known for Sargeist, Horna and a number of other projects throughout the years)
Finnentum delves more into the Nationalistic side of black metal and this 7'' (I think) is a real gem. Side a "Skadi" starts with a dark folkish atmosphere. Shatraug's vocals on this are more folky. The sound reminds me somewhat of Isengard (If i could pick a "band") there's also definitely a punk-ish element to Finnentum (more-so RAC) the riffs here are basic but very well worked to invoke elements of pride, sorrow and hatred. Side b has the track "Vapaa" (Free) begins with a mid-paced riff and a brooding riff. The second riff raises the bar (and pace) a little. Vocals are mid ranged almost spoken/sung (somewhere between) the riffs again invoke the feeling of anger, pride and sorrow! Finnentum certainly conjures up images of the past!I won't go too much into the tracks as single entities but I would advise buying the 7'' if you can find it somewhere. Excellent stuff, proving Shatraug certainly knows how to capture atmosphere.

Istorn - Gjennom Morke Skogen - Cassette - Fossbrenna Productions

Istorn seem to have been a very short lived project from Norway which surfaced around 2004. The first track "Gjennom Morke Skogen" starts with a riff which could have been lifted from an old Burzum recording. The sound straight away is murky and very low-fi. The recording sounds like it was recorded on an old tape recorder in an abandoned shed somewhere in the woodlands. There's a certain amount of sorrow, anger and isolation in this first track which switches between only a few riffs which are very sombre and melodic. Track two "Grief" begins with a tremolo guitar riff which soon is enveloped by a basic drumbeat. Once again, this opening segment could have been lifted from a multitude of other demos and bands I have heard throughout the years. Track three "Morke" once again begins with a riff that Bathory or Burzum might have used back in those glorious days of old.
"Morke" sounds quite similar to "Gjennom Morke Skogen" in some places but somewhat strays from the same fate with a few riffs which give this song their own character in places. Unfortunately the biggest downfall to the demo is that it's practically instrumental (excluding the few faint howls) in places.
These tracks re-recorded with vocals would have been very interesting to hear.

Arnstadt/Sombre Chermin - Parmi Les Ruines - Split 7'' - Sabbath's Fire/W.Assault

This 7'' Ep has been in my collection for many years and has always been one I have returned to. Arnstadt are a French-Canadian (Quebecois) band that formed back around 2001. They released a demo tape and a full length record. Sombre Chemin were a fantastic project from Paris that is no longer active. Their sound was very interesting and rather individual.
Side a features Arnstadt's track "Le Tombeau de L'Humanite"(The Tomb of Humanity)
The song opens with a very mid-paced riff which brings to mind Burzum. The vocals sound a little more in the background on this recording over their previous works, somewhat reminding me of "Filosofem" era Burzum vocals. The production on this track certainly does the song justice and I can hear clearly everything which is going on. This aids the song massively as the riffs are very atmospheric. With the track there's a definite darkness and aura of foreboding and dread. Arnsstadt to me never got the recognition they deserved and this track (where it's not my favourite of theirs) certainly cements that Arnstadt were a good band who knew how to create the right atmosphere.
Side b features Sombre Chemin's track "Les Racines du Vieil Arbre" (The Roots of the Old Tree) which begins with a mid-paced riff which reminds me instantly of the tracks featured on "Nous resterons fidèles..." which was a collection tape from Sombre Chemin released back in 2005. The mix and production for a lot of these songs were very lo-fi and rough. This track certainly serves the split fine and SC really put their stamp on a sound dwelling somewhere between Graveland, Burzum , Bilskirnir and a few other lesser known projects. Sombre Chemin always had a very loose sound and their performance was not always 100% "professional" (who cares ...right?) what matters is the attitude and spirit of black metal. Vilwolfheim certainly knows how to write riffs which invoke something that seemingly is lost in a lot of black metal records that have surfaced within the last 7-8 years. He seems to know what works and this song again is a fine example of Sombre Chemin's brilliance. Once again, SC provides and both bands serve this split 7'' perfectly.

Marbh - Uma Nação Renascida pelas Chamas - Cassette - Frenteuropa

Marbh seems to have been a short-lived project from Lusitania (Portugal) Marbh's sound seems to be very much inspired by the old bands from France such as Kristallnacht & Seigneur Voland. Track 1 "Introducão" sets the tone with a sample from a movie or film series. (I'm not too sure which)
Track two "Honra e Glória por toda a Eternidade" (Honour and Glory For All Eternity)
Starts off with a blast beat and thin tremolo guitar riff, instantly bringing to mind the old recordings of Kristallnacht. The only problem here is the production which is very flat ...it's a shame more time wasn't taken to record a worthy bassline to thicken up the sound a little. The guitar tone is very clean. This could quite easily have been a forgotten Eisenwinter demo (on reflection) Track three "Uma Nação Renascida pelas Chamas " (A Nation Reborn by the Flames) starts again with a blast beat. Again this awakens the spirit of Kristallnacht, Moonblood, Seigneur Voland and even Eisenwinter. There's also an element of RAC in the sound of Marbh which is (or was) very refreshing when I first heard this demo some years back. The riffs invoke the same kind of feeling I got from hearing the "Reichswinter" demo/EP from Eisenwinter. Track four "O Chamamento dos Ancestrais" (The Calling of the Ancestors) which opens with a ferocious blast beat which again reminds me somewhat of something that could have been an old rehearsal track of Godless North, Moonblood or (again) Eisenwinter. The riffs once more invoke a feeling of battle. There's not much "let up" in Marbh's track and every track works as an assault to the senses. Marbh seem to work around 2-3 riffs very well, the compositions are rather simple yet very effective. The vocals unfortunately are a little pushed to the back of the mix which would really be my only complaint apart from the slightly "thin" production which would have been better with a more thumping kick drum and possibly something more going into the guitar mix.
Track five "Acorda Lusitânia!" (Wake up Lusitania!)There seems to be a "call to arms" about this track (by the title alone) At the beginning of the track there's a militant marching song (from where I am not 100% certain) The song the starts with a simple RAC riff and a "rock" drumbeat. It's clear when listening to the song and reading the title of the song that Marbh really is taking a different step with this song. A "sung" chorus invokes the feeling of Brotherhood, Strength and Pride.

"Pela Gloria
Pela vitoria
Pelo amor pela terra mae
Abre os olhos e acredita
Num novo imperio, pela revolucao"

For glory
By victory
For the love of mother earth
Open your eyes and believe
In a new empire, by the revolution

If these tracks were re-recorded with a full band and a little more time would have been devastating! Marbh unfortunately seems a dead project these days (which is a great shame) since this work displays a project with a lot of atmosphere and spirit.
HAIL MARBH!

VAAL

Greetings...I see VAAL was born in MMXVI (2016)
was VAAL something that had been in your mind for sometime or something that came to you almost on a "whim" ?

I always wanted to start a more traditional black metal project that was written and recorded by myself only. The inspiration was flowing and then Vaal came into existence. The rest is history…

There has so far been three VAAL releases ...are there any plans for the future you care to speak of?

The next output will be a split CD with Wolves Eyes from Albion. The material continues in the rotten and primitive vein of the first full-length, no compromises whatsoever. After that the project will remain silent for a while, but not dead. I think I've done enough with the project as it is at the moment.

What bands would you say influences VAAL's sound most? for me I can certainly here some of the old Polish masters inspiration there. (Plus some other inspiration)

The attitude of Judas Iscariot always motivated me to start a project by myself. He did not let technical difficulties and lack of skill get in the way of creating absolutely powerful and hateful music. He'll be an inspiration forever. The old Polish scene was always a big influence, too. Still unravelled in terms of hatred, atmosphere and obscurity.

VAAL's lyrics seem to revolve around a host of themes "Verborgen in stilte" (Hidden in Silence) "Doudeskraaft" (Death Force) "Geesten van de verlorenen" (Ghosts of the Lost) Could you maybe delve a little deeper into your lyrics, inspiration and philosophy? What does the word "Vaal" mean also?

Vaal is a Dutch word for 'bleak', which was fitting for the type of music I wanted to create. Lyrically speaking it's about very personal themes that probably would not make any sense to outsiders. They contain tales and visions about my own personal experience in this material realm and the one beyond… Some lyrics are also more straightforward where pure hatred is the only emotion present.

What other underground acts/bands do you like and support?

Hard to answer, too many to mention… Check out stuff released by Black Abyss Productions, Frost & Fire, Darkness Attack and Tour De Garde. Solid labels with a good roster of bands.

How do you feel about social media and the link with Black Metal and underground music and art?

Social media has its time and place but definitely not for underground Black Metal. That's all I have to say about that...

I know you are a very active person in many projects..
Do you ever find it hard differentiating between ideas on a lyrical or musical scale?

Not really. My mood tends to swift pretty rapidly, which is also one of the reasons I have multiple projects. There is always a need to create art but I have broad interests and I like to keep my projects focussed and different from one another. Sometimes I'll record a lot with one project, and sometimes there is nothing recorded for months. A time and place for everything.

What format do you prefer most for VAAL? I see that "Geesten van de verlorenen" was/is available on all three formats. And which format do you enjoy listening to yourself on a personal level?

I don't care, as long as the music is available I'm happy with whatever format it's on.

There's been a lot of controversy as of late concerning gigs being banned by antifa filth! How do you see the future of live gigs for "extreme" bands?

There should be more private shows for local comrades who understand and support the ideology behind the music. I speak from experience that such events cultivate more intimate and stronger groups of like minded individuals. Fuck 'music enthusiasts' and political correct assholes!

I see also that you have worked with NEW ERA PRODUCTIONS , BLACK ABYSS PRODUCTIONS and also ZWARTKUNST SMEDERIJ. Will you use these labels in future for VAAL?

Yes!

Would you like to (or are there any plans to) have VAAL play live?

I've been toying around with some idea's but I don't think it'll ever happen.

Ok so it's the end of the interview...any last words?

Thank you for this interview! Death to parasites and modern black metal.

MACABRE OMEN was born in Hellas during the 90's.
What were the original ideas with MACABRE OMEN in those days?

Those days circa '94 and prior to that were very pure. We were still discovering the scene and the whole black metal movement for that matter. Everything was new and it was very difficult to hold on to new music since everything was initiated on a tape trading and snail mail basis. The idea was to be part of the scene and put some form of personal stamp down if that was ever possible. There is a natural evolution in MACABRE OMEN from the beginning up to now with literally starting something raw and amateurish to reaching a certain peak acknowledged on a worldwide basis or so it seems.

How inspirational for you were those old Greek bands such as Necromantia, Varathron, Thou Art Lord & Rotting Christ? And which bands from Hellas in the last 10-15 years have you shown interest in and supported?

I have to say that all those early Hellenic hordes, known and lesser known had a big inspiration to my sound and vision. The same of course goes for bands from other scenes such as the Scandinavian one, the South American one and the South European one. There was no discrimination for me when it came to 90s black metal, the whole movement was pure and exceptional. There have been plenty of newer bands over the years that are of interest to me and I have been supporting almost every horde through my label Demonion Prod. and its most recent reincarnation Maleficentissimus Triumphatus. However I have to admit that although I am an avid collector I do not really listen to a lot of new material for a variety of reasons.

I know you had a label entitled Demonion Productions. Is the label still active?

Not on a release basis but as a mail order yes. Maleficentissimus Triumphatus is taking over from where Demonion left off. Demonion however has always been around as a mail order and stall at underground gigs spreading black metal like the plague.

How do you view the modern "scene" with Facebook, file sharing & Sound cloud? Do you feel it's important to adhere to these new methods or are you more interested in the old ways of doing things? (Flyers, tape trading etc...)

If you would ask me that question in 1994, i.e. would you like to be able to listen to an album instantly through some magical internet portal I would probably cheer with joy. In theory it should be a pleasant experience. In reality this is far from it. It enables everyone to have a band (or 10 bands since everything is so expendable nowadays) and just expose it all online. There is no mystique, there is no occultism, there is no mystery and for that matter I cannot feel what I felt in that first decade when I got involved in the underground. I personally avoid these means at all costs and stick to flyers and personal trades. If my music is available on other platforms that was not my workings, I have other more ancient methods that I prefer.

MACABRE OMEN's last record "Gods of War - At War" is a few years old now.
How did you approach the recording when compared to the previous full length "The Ancient Returns"?

It was a very different experience all together with only one thing in common… the lack of rehearsing as a band with the drummer. I think this approach gives it a more live and spontaneous feel. The differences between both albums are vast ranging from the overall budget and the fact that the debut was recorded in a mere 3 days whilst the follow up took a good 8 months of visiting and revisiting the studio to perfect it. I understand and appreciate the following "The Ancient Returns" has had over the years but the result I got with "Gods of War - At War" is what I always wanted to achieve.

Greece has faced a lot of problems with the EU. How do you view the future for your homeland?

Grim is a word that would describe the situation. New laws are being spawned all the time as we speak, a lot of them surely deriving from the Dark Ages. I have no sympathy with this situation it is truly yet again heartbreaking.

Have you any interest in MACABRE OMEN playing live? Do you feel MACABRE OMEN would work live?

I will not deny that there have been several requests and numerous offers for MACABRE OMEN to perform on stage. I think a handful of key gigs with the right line up would really compliment the "Gods of War - At War" album and work to my benefit. Sadly I do not feel too eager to perform on stage at the moment.

Is there any chance you would re-release the old MACABRE OMEN demos and split EP's ? (Something I would suggest)

Again there have been several requests for this. Personally, I see no reason to re-release anything since it would not have a natural flow on one single release. But I am in talks with VAN to maybe initiate such release in a small undisclosed number to mark the 25th year of activity of the band and get some closure on the subject. We will find out next year if this will take place.

Lyrically MACABRE OMEN seems to delve into Greek mythology, Folklore and warlike themes. Has the lyrical direction matured over time or are things quite similar to how they were back in the 90's?

For me creating music and lyrics is an art and a way to express myself. The older I get the more experiences I gather so I would say that the themes have matured in line with my age and so has the music. The whole approach is more intricate and complex so to speak. My music is the soundtrack to my journey in this miserable life.

The Spartan values and virtues....Will these ideals ever be restored in a modern world? And could you describe your ideal society?

There is hardly any code of honour left in this world, humans seem to have lost any form of values or appreciation. My ideal society would require to have high values, honour, respect and common sense but alas these matters seem Utopian in today's way of living.

Asides from the Greek bands mentioned above: Which other bands in recent years have interested you?

I have a big admiration for bands that come up with their own sound and focus on what they want to achieve. Bands such as DARKSPACE, CULTES DES GHOULES, NECROS CHRISTOS, DARK TRIBE, LUNAR AURORA, ISENSCUR, EXTINCTION to name but a few tick those boxes to me. There are definitely a lot of interesting hordes out there but they are all sadly hidden underneath a plethora of unnecessary releases.

What is coming next for MACABRE OMEN?

I am currently on a junction point writing material for both MACABRE OMEN and THE ONE simultaneously. Not unlike anything I have never done before but more than before for some reason. There are a lot of ideas, riffs, visions for a future MACABRE OMEN release but as always there is no rush in finalizing anything.

Any last words?

Thanks for the support over the years and support the true black metal underground. The rest will undeniably sort itself out via natural selection.

Would I be right in assuming that the name BLOOD TYRANT would loosely/closely be homage to Vlad the Impaler? Or maybe you can elaborate a little more to what the initial idea was with the name BLOOD TYRANT?

BYM: The name sprung to mind when we were conceptualizing for a new project but actually far before any tune was recorded. There were definitely trappings of Vlad the Impaler, but a lot of true inspiration came from the visions of the Shadow Kingdom and it's unexplored realms, as they shaped in our consciousness. The vampyric aspect of our music is more akin to elite dominance of spirit, mind and soul reaping the weak. An ode to darkness and to the blood spilt by ancestors defending against the invading hordes spreading weak-willed scripture and false desert idolism. And of course there's the ongoing war
with the False Heresy to keep us inspired. This is our battle with the frauds currently infesting true Black Metal.

What are your opinions concerning occultism? Are there any specific philosophies or doctrines that BLOOD TYRANT is inspired by? Seemingly you have an interest in metamorphosis, vampirism and darkness too... do you care to maybe elaborate aspects of your lyrical direction?

TWS: We only have our own philosophies and doctrines that do not follow any existing paths. We follow what is right in our eyes, and if this means some things are 'contradicting' to some people, so be it. We are beyond them. We are here to sow fear, confusion and hatred. Nothing more, nothing less.

BYM: Obscurity and ritual are an important aspect of Blood Tyrant, harking back to the superstitious times when people were largely illiterate and feared the unexplained phenomena in nature and primal urges in themselves, when devils and malignant spirits corrupted their souls. When they needed cruel and mighty reminders to stay serviceable to higher purposes like that of the Blood Tyrant.

How do you feel the current Black Metal "scene" is? What opinions do you have concerning social media?

BYM: Blood Tyrant purposely has a very small footprint on social media. Social media has it's uses but it's rather incongruent with the obscure path we're on. The scene of today suffers from oversaturation, overexposure, infestation more than ever before. We're maintaining our code without compromise and stick to it. The rest can do as they please, the fake falter in the carnival.

TWS: We don't have a problem with the medium itself, but it all depends on how you use it. Sparse use to promote your work is not a problem, but it all depends on what your ultimate goal is. If you prefer to spread your work through tape trading only, that's an admirable feat, but it doesn't make your music more special or better. Concerning the "scene": I don't know and I don't care.

Which bands or projects would you say are the most inspiring for BLOOD TYRANT?

BYM : I'd rather not drop names here, anyone that listens closely will hear those influences from the early 90's Norwegian and Polish scenes, when the flame was burning white hot.

TWS: In terms of music; probably the Norwegian and Polish cults. But they are just a foundation of our inspiration.

Which labels do you feel are worthwhile in today's scene? & which labels do you think you will work with for the future?

BYM : Iron Bonehead Productions, NWN!, Skjold, Tour de Garde have all been steadfast allies in releasing our works so far. There are a few other great labels that have distributed our works, offer worthwhile output and work with true spirit and dedication but naming them all is boring and reeks of scene whoring. They know who they are and the true adepts know the ways to finding them. We maintain our independence and of course our own labels. Time will tell what the future holds in terms of alliances.

Which format do you feel is most suitable for BLOOD TYRANT's sound? Or do you not feel that there is a format you prefer for BLOOD TYRANT?

BYM : Every format serves it's purpose and is suitable for dispersing our work, the whole "format" argument is stale and trivial, so we embrace every format as we see fit.

TWS: Bands sticking to certain formats because it's 'better' or 'less trendy' or whatever garbage argument you can come up with should fuck off. You are part of the problem.

I happen to know that both members of BLOOD TYRANT are in some great projects. Has BLOOD TYRANT become the primary project for the both of you?

TWS: All our projects are based upon the current mood we are in at the time. This means that there is time and place for everything. Therefore, it's hard to determine which project has the utmost priority.

BYM: While Blood Tyrant has a very established purpose and track record, our own frame of mind dictates what gets worked on. The maelstrom also has a strong hand in guiding me personally.

I hear in BLOOD TYRANT a lot of atmosphere. For me there's a very medieval sound and aura within your recordings. How have the past releases been recorded? Have you used analog or digital recording set up's to capture BLOOD TYRANT's sound?

TWS: We always used a mixture of both; digital and analogue. The Blood Tyrant side of the split withWarden was recorded entirely on a 4-track tape recorder, while the demo and full-length have beenrecorded using digital gear. I personally prefer the digital way of working, it's easier to work with and gives you a lot of creative freedom. If we're really after a particular lo-fi sound we usually resort back to the old trusty 4-tracker. The damn thing is currently dying a slow death though...

BYM: The tools at our disposal are varied so we use what's servicing a specific sound or circumstance. For the full-length album we wanted more control in the mix therefore used digital gear but we've also used a combination of analog and digital. It's really not very important or interesting to me.

I wanted to somewhat veer off from asking political questions because I would not align BLOOD TYRANT so much with politics. However, how do you view the future for Europe? We are seeing a lot of dictating at present by the EU to "scare" countries away from leaving the EU, what do you think is the ultimate goal of the powers that be?

BYM: Modern politics and Judeo-Christian society should be thrown back into the Dark Ages and it's numbers vastly reduced by war, plague, famine. That's all I have to say about the current world politics and future of the EU.

TWS: I foresee a future that's even more dictated by the Judeo-Christian principles than before. Even the so-called 'alt right' traitors still follow the same capitalist and Jewish doctrines that are in the end the biggest problems of all. Our Christian society is now paying the ultimate price, and rightfully so.

What does the future hold for BLOOD TYRANT?

BYM: There will be a second full length. Ideas and concepts are slowly gestating towards a concrete manifestation as other projects currently occupy us.

The last words are yours....

The Dark War Must Go On!

MORGENNEBEL

MORGENNEBEL is new project from the USA who have released only the one demo tape "Remembrance to the Source of Power" How did MORGENNEBEL begin? And what were the original intentions for the project?

Hails, Morgennebel was formed in paying respect to the beauty and superiority of the Aryan race, during a time when tales of the old Gods had overtaken my interest, they have not left my interest.

What is the meaning behind the name MORGENNEBEL?

"Morning Fog" in German

Which bands have influenced your sound?

For Morgennebel:
Der Sturmer, Fullmoon, Blazebirth Hall circle, Absurd, Graveland, Lord Wind, Veles, Wehrhammer, Funeral/Seigneur Voland/Kristallnacht, Peste Noire, Sombre Chemin, Spear of Longinus, Evil, Donar's Krieg, Grausamkeit, Wolves Eyes & Likvann, Storm, Temnozor, and many others but these are some that come to my mind currently of the past and present, although they all may not translate over into the sound.

There are a lot of bands these days by people who seem more interested in posing on social media. What is your opinion of social media and black metal working together?

It all depends on how it is used and why it is used, and it seems that you will get complaints regardless of the stance you take. If people would like to notify others where to get their music officially then I see no problem with this but if it is used for garnering attention, posting ridiculous photos, starting drama, paid promotions, and so forth then I will simply have no interest in listening to your works nor believe that it is black metal. It's temporary nonsense…it has put me into contact with bands I am a fan of and we were able to do splits and for that I am grateful, let it burn otherwise, I do not have any personal accounts. Death to forum nonsense…!!

Being from the USA which bands from your country have served as an influence?

Hell, Warwulf is a solid project upholding the ideal from the States but not many are coming to my mind at the moment…no surprise…heil Judas Iscariot…Europe has always birthed the pure…

"Remembrance to the Source of Power" was limited to 30 copies. Why only 30 copies?

I thought the music was crap because my drum kit is on its last limb and I wanted to show no disrespect to the heritage and pagan essence driving this project but I had reasoned that if it was being received well by some allies of mine in Europe then it had managed to do its job to some degree and should be released to them and others. I was offered 30 copies so this is what I took.

Can you explain some of the lyrical topics featured for MORGENNEBEL?

Remaining prideful and honourable to the death above degeneracy, recanting the ethics and tales of old Norse tale, admiring both heritage and nature, waging war to the victimized rats, smiting their continual advances and all associates who share their behaviours.

Could you name five records that served as the greatest influence to you?

For Morgennebel:
Fullmoon - United Aryan Evil
Storm - Nordavind
Lord Wind - Forgotten Songs
Der Stufmer - The Blood Calls for W.A.R!
Absurd - Facta Loquuntur

Would you like to have MORGENNEBEL play live sometime?

In its current state, no. If I was to meet dedicated and competent ones to carry this out then I would gladly, but these types are scarce in my experience, perhaps I am just difficult to work with.

You also play in NIHIL INVOCATION; it seems you have been very active with that project. Would you expect MORGENNEBEL to become as active as NI?

No, Nihil Invocation has been my primary focus and will remain so for the time being. I have a feeling that I am never productive enough with Nihil Invocation and I do not get this same sense of urgency with my side projects, they take up the time in between releases for that group. However, this style of writing is quite a natural one to me so you never know. The content is separate for obvious reasons, Nihil Invocation has no business being a platform for Paganism.

You have used an array of symbolism in the MORGENNEBEL cassette layout such as the Black Sun, the Totenkopf & the Celtic Cross. These symbols represent an array of beliefs. Do you think a lot of people are worried nowadays about how people perceive them if they use symbols like such and have certain opinions? Do you think black metal is "dangerous" or (for the most part) does it just come off as rebellious entertainment?

You can easily pick out the ones that are worried about it and make a point to stay away, but there are many that misuse them to their own pleasure and profit that are just as pathetic. Quality black metal that is effective in its job is dangerous and so are the ones who make it.

Any upcoming releases or future plans for MORGENNEBEL?

If I am able to disclose, I have been communicating with Wolves Eyes for an upcoming split and I currently finish my content. As of now, this is all.

The last words are yours...

"WE DON'T BELIEVE IN THE PRINCE OF PEACE, HAIL THE GODS OF W.A.R!"

Greetings Odal, when did you begin HAMERGILDE and what were the original intentions for the project?

I formed Hamergilde in early 2000 and teamed up with Mohorth later that year. I didn't have any real intentions with HAMERGILDE besides making music, pass the time and have some fun at it. The scene in the Netherlands wasn't very big at the time, so when our rehearsal tracks spread to the underground we were given the opportunity to play live a few times until the concept of our music became clear. From then on playing live in most venues was nearly impossible.

HAMERGILDE have released so far very few releases...
Why is this?

The main reason is that it wasn't my intention to release music. In fact the demo 'Der Stolz des Nordlands' wasn't even an official 'release'. It was a tape with some rehearsal tracks which was distributed on request and given to some friends and acquaintances. The cover was a concept 'design' on which a first sketch of a HAMERGILDE-logo was used. The first ' official' release was 'Wodans Krieger'. This release was made because there was a demand for material at the live concerts. We re-recorded some songs and put them on a CD-R. No more than 40 copies were sold at our last live gig.
Late 2002 Mohorth and I had personal differences and ended our cooperation. That came roughly at the same time that I grew more and more disappointed with the development of the black metal scene. Bands were selling out and black metal became a trend resulting in leftish hipsters and goths and all kind of other low lives visiting the concerts. Not wanting to associate myself with 'them' I stopped working on HAMERGILDE and 'retreated' from the scene altogether. It was only in 2016 that I felt the urge to make music again and encouraged by some friends of old I started writing some new material. 'Weerwolf' is the result of that.

For me it's clear to hear a few of your influences in HAMERGILDE.
Could you name for me which record in particular influenced you most?

I find it very difficult to name one record that influenced me most. Black metal is too diverse to name one record or band. Although I doubt that it resonates through my music I always found the early releases of BURZUM and GRAVELAND the most inspirational, especially BURZUM's 'Hvis lyset tar oss' and GRAVELANDS 'Celtic Winter'. But if I have to pick one release that influenced HAMERGILDE most I guess I should name 'Facta Lonquuntur' of the mighty ABSURD. I always liked there straightforward music and their great lyrics.

Could you explain for me how you recorded "Weerwolf"? Was there much use of old analog tools or did you use digital recording setup(s) for the record?

I recorded 'Weerwolf' solely using a digital recording setup. I'm the first to admit that analog tools give better sounds and add atmosphere to the recordings, but using a digital recording setup is much more practical and less time consuming. I record all music at home using a computer and an audio-interface. The drums I programmed using Cubase. When I'm done recording I send the audio files and the drums in a midi-file for mixing and mastering to a studio. The vocals are recorded in a makeshift studio of a friend of mine and added in the mix.

Which format (if any) do you think suits HAMERGILDE's sound best?

I'm not sure. I like to release HAMERGILDE on vinyl someday, because vinyl might add some atmosphere to an otherwise very clean recording and because I think vinyl records have more -what we in Dutch call- eeuwigheidswaarde. I guess it translates as 'eternity value' in English. But I like the tape release also and wouldn't mind doing a CD release.

Can you (if possible) define your ideal society? Would you return to an old "trade" system as such? Do you think there even is an ideal society?

This is a very difficult question, because in my opinion there are more possible answers. The honest answer to your question is 'no'. I cannot define an ideal society. I believe an ideal society is a society that suits the character of our people best and I think that National Socialism came closest at realizing that. But our world is not the same as the world of 80 years ago and for the moment
I don't believe in a regime change nor in political solutions. For the time being I believe we should focus in creating small groups of likeminded souls and try to build societies within a society for the main purpose of looking out for each other, preserve what we have and develop our own thoughts and ideals so that in the future we can built on that.

Is there any likeliness that you will re-issue "Der Stolz des Nordlands" or "Wodans Krieger"? I ask this due to the limitation of both releases previously.

'Wodans Krieger' will probably be released again, because I believe it deserves a proper release. After all these years I still like the way it turned out and I still receive good feedback when people hear it.
'Der Stolz des Nordlands' will probably not be released. As I mentioned it wasn't intended as a release at all. It's a rehearsal tape of dubious quality and you can often hear us talking and laughing during the songs. Although I know there are people who like the sound and atmosphere of the tape, I would rather re-record some of the songs in a proper way and use some songs on next releases as I did with 'Der Stolz des Nordlands' on the 'Weerwolf'-release.

**I see Heidens Hart released your most recent output "Weerwolf" on cassette.
Will this release have a CD version anytime soon or a vinyl version?**

I'm not sure. Heidens Hart helped me out a lot by offering help with the distribution of the release of the cassette, but I'm not sure if HH is willing or able to officially release material of HAMERGILDE. The material of HAMERGILDE is somewhat controversial and releasing it can give them trouble with authority. I can't expect them to risk that and I'm not asking it of them. That doesn't mean I don't intent to release a CD- or vinyl version. If the opportunity comes, I will take it.

**We seem to live in very obscure times.....
What do you feel the future will bring for white/heathen Europeans?**

The future of Europe is dark, literally and figuratively speaking. The system that has been forced upon us, won't allow a regime change let alone us to take the drastic measures needed to revert the wrong that has been done. The 'world' will intervene and as our people start to awaken from this 'multicultural dream', the European Union and the NGO's quite literally tried to flood our beaches with foreigners to try to make any attempt to reclaim our heritage futile. Nevertheless, I believe that our future is not entirely hopeless. There is a growing awareness of our heritage and native Europeans are beginning to realize that a multicultural society is a lie and vote/act accordingly. Being a white nationalist is much more accepted nowadays than it was 15 years ago and that will grow in the future.

**Can we expect more material to come in future for HAMERGILDE?
Are there any plans just yet?**

Currently I'm working on a new album. I hope to release it in the beginning of 2019. And I'm discussing the re-release of 'Wodans Krieger' and am writing some songs for a potential split-album. So yes, you can expect more material in the future for sure.

Ok, interview over ...please leave any last words or comments beneath.

Thank you for this interview. It has been an honor.
Herr Odal

Der Stürmer

When did DER STURMER begin? What were the initial influences to begin the band?

Hjarulv Henler - Our campaign began officially in '98, after contemplating with the idea to form something that would annihilate the dormant "scene" of that time (comprised mainly by a mongrelized "darkwave/symphonic-black metal" and retrothrash bollocks), heavily under the influence of old Sarcofago, old Sodom, Spear of Longinus, etc.

How do you view DER STURMER's first record "The Blood Calls for W.A.R"? Anything you would change in retrospect?

HH - I would change that pathetic drum machine for sure. Also a couple of tracks needed to be a bit more aggressive. But all in all, it is a satisfying debut recorded under the influence of hatred and I don't think that it need any re-recording.

DER STURMER has never been a band to apologies to the braindead "scene" or pacifists and morons. How have you seen the "scene" change in the last few years?

HH - The vast change came after '93, where only a handful of worthy bands emerged after the demise of Euronymous and the incarceration of Grishnackh. Then everybody was free to seek his "rockstar career". Yet, with the advent of time, things are still getting worse!

Greece is currently in a bad way ...how do you view the future for the Greek people?

HH - Bleak and dismal - Hellas must be purged and re-found!

Your last full length record was in 2011, is there a new full length record on the horizon?

HH - Yes, this will probably happen sometime in 2019. I have some ideas and some scattered riffs here and there. As always, we will strive for an even more aggressive outcome, a holocaust put into musick!

How do you work with DER STURMER in terms of recording? Do you use digital or analog recorders?

HH - I write all the music and a few lyrics and Hagall takes care most of the lyrics and the vocals. We use a digital studio.

DER STURMER have been active for quite some years now. How do you view other long standing greek bands such as Bannerwar, Kawir, Wolfnacht etc?

HH - We only have contact with Wolfnacht and Goatvomit.

Spartans - a devoted tribe of warrior folk. Will there ever be a group/clan to rise up in the modern world?

HH - No, modernity has rendered the Western man into a worthless piece of meat interested in technological gadgets and with nigger-like mentality. What is needed is some worldwide disaster that will slap him back in his senses.

The current "scene" The vinyl trends , record flipping and Facebook accounts : In all this madness and sheep like following are there still bands who uphold the true ethos and ideals of black metal?

HH - Yes, there are a few, like us, Intolitarian, Black Witchery, Adytum, Witchcraft and a handful of others who keep the Unholy Flame of Black Metal still burning. Few yet devoted!

Have you any other plans for DER STURMER at present? Any up-coming releases?

HH - We'll start work on the new album right after the recordings with Wodulf. Expect more crimes against humanity!

Greetings Skabb, How did LIKVANN come to your mind and when exactly was the project born? What was the intent for LIKVANN?

Heil og sæl!
It came to my mind first time in 2009/2010, and was born shortly after.
The intent at the time I started it, was to channel certain feelings and thoughts. I will say that is still one of the intents that I have, among other intents as well.

LIKVANN has quite a discography, how have things changed from release to release?

I would say things have changed in a very good way. The main content and the idea behind has remained the same through the years, and the same with the sound. An improvement in the sound happened after the second demo, because of new equipment, but other than that, it's the same. Of course it has been improvement when it comes to the compositions too, but I don't feel I've lost the essense.

"Furet og værbitt" was your first album. How did the ideas come about for the release? And what were or who were your main influences? I can certainly hear obvious influences in the tracks.

The ideas for this release came as it does all the time; personal thoughts and by watching the modern world.

Hmm... It's hard to say what my musical influences was at the time. I don't remember being inspired by anyone in particular, but I'm sure my general musical influences shines through my music.

Due to its glorious past ...I must ask, how do you view the Norwegian scene at present? Does Norway still have much to offer us? Who would you advise to the readers who maybe may look into the past to find the gems and be a little skeptical of the present?

At present it's rather small compared to the activity in the 90's. My personal favorites amongst Norwegian black metal would be Kaevum and Nordvrede. Simply because it's unpolished, raw, and how I like music in the genre.I would also recomend to check out Kirkebrann, Skaur, and of course my other band, Djevelkult.

Has LIKVANN played live? If so, how was the reaction? If not, is this something you would like to do in the future?

Not till now. I've been talking about it several times with possible live musicians, and they are positive to be part of the lineup. I don't know how far ahead we are talking, but I'm pretty sure it'll be a Likvann concert some time in the future.

What is the main lyrical attributes to LIKVANN? Do you take inspiration mainly from day to day life? Old Norse fables? Politics? Mysticism? Maybe other elements you care to share with the reader?

As I've mentioned before, to see what the world we live in is becoming, gives me a lot of inspiration. With this comes also politics, but I wouldn't call Likvann political for that reason. But to see that the world has changed as much at it has in less than twenty years makes you think. Old Norse fables and stories also inspires me, but I wouldn't say it's my main source of inspiration.

How do you view the "scene"? And what does it mean to you?

It depends on what you mean by the "scene", but I feel the underground scene is going in the right direction. You see more and more bands being passionate about what they do, and not doing it for some fucking fame or whatever.

I see (like myself) you have worked with Werewolf Promotion (POL) How have you found working with this label ? And do you plan on keeping things as they are?

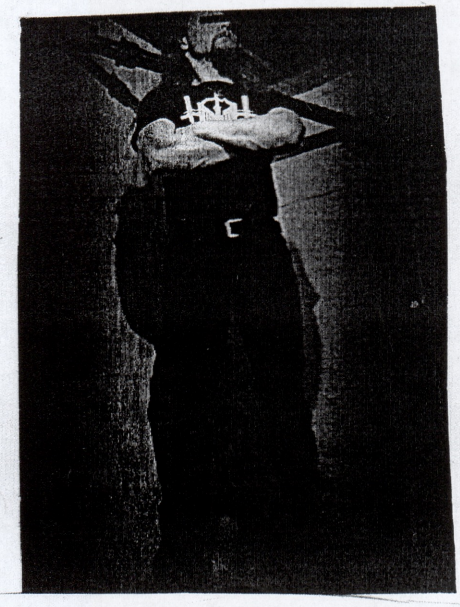
I'm very satisfied with all work together with WP. Everything is in order and controlled. My music is also being widely distributed from this label, and it comes to the correct places. Also the quality of the physical releases themselves are very high. I'm totally sure I won't have any issues with the label in the future, so I plan to stick to as it is by now.

Europe is in a real mess right now due to the ZOG scum who have allowed a tidal wave of immigrants into our lands. How do you feel this can be stopped or changed? Is Norwegian nationalism on the rise at present? How are things with the general public and society as a whole in Norway?

It's hard to say how this problems should be handled. The elected politicians are doing what they want, and if you or me talk against their desicions, it counts nothing. If one takes the matter into own hands, you'll probably be sent to prison. I believe Norwegian nationalism is on the rise, but not amongst the common man. And the ones that takes this as a serious issue, usually don't talk loudly about it. And the ones that talk the loudest about it doesn't really have the brain to come with a serious argument. I know little about the actual state of things in the bigger cities, but I feel they are trying to bring this multi kulti mindset to the smaller villages. Without much luck though.

Which bands do you deem to be some of the most important in the "scene" right now?

This is my personal opinion, and I answer for which bands I feel the most important, and I would point at all bands involved in the Flammes De France circle. They have a strong message, and are passionate about what they do.



What is next to come from LIKVANN?

A split with Morok was released few days ago. The Likvann part of the split is the entire Gammel Jord EP. Other than that, I'm working on new music, but work and personal life tends to come in the way, so I've had little time to work on it lately. I can only say it will be released some time this year.

Thanks again to Skabb/LIKVANN for their contribution to this zine. The last words are yours...

No problem.
I would suggest that everyone looks at what the world has become. Think about what your son or daughter might have to experience while they take a walk in the capital of your country. Can you handle the question "Why didn't you do anything to stop this?"

Hails Severoth, how did MOROK begin and what were the original ideas for the project?

Hails! Before Morok I was (and still is) part of Endless Battle since 2009 and we done all together with Dusk. But as any other way of co-operation band is compromise. And I don't wanted compromises. I created many music that for some reason wasn't used in EB so I created Morok in 2014. To spread my own darkness.

Can you explain to me what it is lyrically that you write about with MOROK?
What are the fundamental aspects behind MOROK's lyrics?

I don't have typical way of writing lyrics. Texts for all my projects are just reflections of my thoughts. "As I walk among the shadows... In the dungeons of mind"
I try to do every my album as portal to other dimensions. And every one see their own reflection there...

What does the name MOROK mean exactly? maybe you could explain to me how you came up with the name for the band also ?

Morok is Ukrainian word means Darkness. Also Morok is demon from Carpathian folklore. It resembles mania. And drives people to madness. He lives in most darkened places of woods. I think name fully represents the essence.

Politically we are (as Europeans) facing very obscure times with the media corrupting the youth into this moronic Marxist mindset!!
Mass flooding/immigration from Africa, Syria etc...
Where do you see Europe in 5 years? As a European how do you feel things are right now? What needs to change?

We live in rotten world. People desire power and money... they want only to consume and destroy. Not all people of course, but most of them. They can't create anything. Just live their shallow and empty lives. So let this darkness eat them. I will remain by myself. If one wants to change something - one can. Stop watching TV, stop read shitty news, stop give money to religious organisations, stop spending money on fancy clothes and other material shit. Stop live in modern world. Get your own opinion. Maybe this would help.

There are a lot of great bands still producing Black Metal with a great amount of spirit and passion. What bands of the modern era do you find interesting?

I don't follow modern scene. Prefer to listen old and trusted. From non 90's BM I like great "Wintermoon Enchantment" by Evilfeast and early works of Midnight Odyssey, Drudkh.

How are things with Ukraine right now? Are there many worthwhile bands?

I think I can call worthwhile only bands from 90's too. Like Nokturnal Mortum, Astrofaes, old Lucifugum, Dub Buk etc. From now active bands it's Ulvegr, Burshtyn, Drudkh

Have you or will you play live with MOROK?

It depends of proposal and my interest. I have all to play live if I want. I have trusted friendly musicians to help. This year I've already played "live" show of Severoth and all was great.

Can you explain your recording process with MOROK? Do you record digitally? Or with analog equipment? And what do you feel are the positives and negatives of both?

I'm recording digitally. As I do all alone it's easier for me that way. Also I can't afford good analog equipment. I record on my own studio usually so to be independent I gathered all instruments and equipment pretty long time. First Morok and Severoth albums were recorded when I don't even have my own guitar and bass. I borrowed them. Analog way is definitely better if we speak about end result, because every part of hardware has its own, unique sound. But digital is easier to handle with, especially alone.

Do you take much inspiration from ancient Slavonic paganism when it comes to writing music and lyrics for MOROK?

I'm not really into Paganism itself, but I very like Ukrainian folklore, which I took inspirations from. And it's heavily rooted in Paganism. Also Ukrainian traditional music and classical poetry inspires me a lot.

I see also that you actually completed two full length records in two years. What inspired you to create that amount of work in such little time?

2 full length it's only Morok. In 2015 I did first Severoth album Winterfall, first Morok album, 2nd Endless Battle album and recorded drums for Zgard on album Totem. In 2016 I did 2nd Morok album, 2nd Severoth album, 2nd Galdur album (Age of Legends) and 3rd Endless Battle album... and then Bezmir, 3rd Severoth and 3rd Galdur in 2017 etc.
About inspiration - well, I don't really know here. I just do what I like to do. Create.

You are also a member of ENDLESS BATTLE, BEZMIR, & SEVEROTH. How do you find time to work with these projects and MOROK?

Yes, I'm member of Endless Battle. It's duet of me and Dusk. Bezmir and Severoth are my solo projects same as Morok where I do all alone. Maybe it's an answer. I do all alone with no compromises and "human factor" so it's fast. If you want something you always will find time for it.

All of your work has been released via Werewolf Promotion.
How do you find the label? Will you continue to have your work released via Werewolf Promotion?

WP is good and reliable guy. We work since 2010 when he released debut demo tape of Endless Battle. And I think we will continue our co-operation.

Any upcoming plans for MOROK you wish to divulge?

No for now. Recently (in march 2018) I recorded Carpathian Fullmoon Ritual EP. It was released as split CD with Likvann titled "Hedmark-Carpathian Spirit of Blood, Soil and Darkness". Currently I'm occupied with 4th Severoth album. I've already finished music part so now it's time for cover art and design. I plan to do another Morok album this year, but for now I don't know exactly how and when it will be.

Good luck for the future.
Any last words?

Be yourself

Abyssus - One Alone in Bloodstained Forest - Cassette - Terror Propaganda.

Abyssus seemingly were a short lived project that did not leave the most lasting impression seeing that this recording was apparently recorded in 1994 and not released until 2007. The demo was released to the total of 100 copies. Track one "Otchłań lasu" (The Abyss of the Forest) begins with a tremolo riff and blasting drums. The vocals come to the fore and bring out some real explosive atmosphere. This sounds like a very raw rehearsal which was recorded on an old tape recorder. What the track lacks in "production" it makes up for in atmosphere. There's no re-inventing the wheel here (in saying that, this was created in 1994) and the obvious influences can be heard. Track two "Warriors of Damned Forest" then begins with another tremolo riff and the drums come into the mix. The vocals are present but they are not doing anything that really brings them too much to the front of the mix or makes them overly memorable. There's a very cold atmosphere on this track, I can almost picture the members in an old cabin in the woods recording this. There's certainly elements of Moonblood in these riffs and the playing (while not hard) certainly brings out that old and cold feeling which is what really makes a lot of the bands from back in those days stand out over the clinical and rather dull recordings we hear a lot of nowadays. Track three "Wieczna zima" (Eternal Winter) starts with a punk drumbeat followed by an atmospheric tremolo riff. Once again, the atmosphere certainly helps the (lack of) production on this tape. The riffs and drumbeats alternate on a few basic (yet perfectly fitting) sections. Once again, the song is a little short and I feel with more time worked on these tracks the songs could have been far more special. The last track (fourth) "One Alone in Bloodstained Forest" Begins with an excellent tremolo riff which invokes the sound of Moonblood, Darkthrone and a few others. Also there are elements of the old Russian BBH bands.
Overall it's unfortunate the demo was not a whole lot longer. The three tracks here certainly displayed something interesting. It would have been great to hear what this Polish three piece could have done if there was to have been more recordings.

Azelsgard - Diabolic Ritual in the Cursed Forest - 7'' - Totenkopf Propaganda

Azelsgard are a polish band that has existed since the 90's. Their sound (as much as their attitude) is black metal through and through. This EP was released back in 2010 by the Greek label Totenkopf Propaganda. Side a features two tracks, the first being "Mgła otulająca złowieszcze lasy Azelsgardu" (Fog Enveloping the Ominous Forests of Azelsgard) which is an intro track.
The track begins with a beating war drum and a subtle yet dark keyboard section.
Already this invokes Wojnar, Veles & Graveland. The atmosphere is perfect here and it works perfectly as a build-up track. The track was captured by Grimspirit (Evilfeast) who has lent his hand to a number of Polish bands throughout the years. The second track "Moja ostatnia krew" (My last blood) starts off with a simplistic mid paced riff which reminds me somewhat of Burzum or Storm. The vocals are very much "howled" almost, like Varg did many years before. There's also a slight comparison here to what you might hear from another uncompromising underground act called Armatus (or even Satan's Sign of War) again, there's that looseness to the composition .The song ends at just the right time as the track seems to have almost gone into a more chaotic area. Side b features the tracks "Diabelski rytuał w lesie przeklętych" (A Devilish Ritual in the Forest of the Damned) and the outro track "Młot Taranisa" (Taranis Hammer) "Diabelski ....." begins with a tremolo riff and some great vocals. Again, there's an atmosphere from some of the older polish bands and some of the more raw German bands that were around a few years back. Where it's evident that Azelsgard are not re-writing the rules: it is apparent that they do things how they want. "Młot Taranisa" works fine as an instrumental outro in which we hear only the sound of thunder on a stormy night.

Empire of Tharaphita - Dreams From the Forgotten Worlds - Cassette - Self-Release

Empire of Tharaphita is a project of Stormheit (From Stormheit, Goatmoon etc..) which exists now under the name of Mooncitadel.
Empire of Tharaphita was not the most active of projects but quality certainly overrides quantity. On this (Their 2nd demo) EoT provides a sound that seemingly is long forgotten in the mire of useless and rather soulless bands that are far too clinical and obvious. EoT really sounds "off the cuff" yet well delivered and arranged. Track 1 "Wandering the Garden of Stars" begins with a tremolo riff which sounds extremely ethereal and ancient. A blast beat comes into the mix and the whole track descends into primordial chaos. There's certainly some atmosphere and attitude to the composition, this is interesting, lively, and full of spirit. Vocals are very reverbed and chaotic (but very fitting and atmospheric)The song takes a few twists and turns but never really drops it's tempo or ever sounds uncomfortable or out of place. If I could draw any influence to mind I would say Nocternity, Immortal, Burzum or Limbonic Art. There's something also that reminds me of the old Stutthof material.
Track two "Opening of the Bounded Serpent" opens with a riff that could have fitted perfectly on the "Black Katharsis" EP of Satanic Warmaster. The sound once more sounds very frantic and somewhat loose BUT interesting and full of character. Something here reminds me of the old records and demos of Isvind (somewhat) The compositions are very fluidic and intense. Often changing and not clinging on to just the basic ideas. The mix and production on this demo just aid in bringing out the atmosphere of the tracks present. The songs seem to work so well with the raw production which (raw as it may be) works so that things can be heard perfectly and still retain that atmosphere which serves the songs so well.
Track three "Gates to the Realm of Tharaphita" begins with a mid-paced riff and drum beat which really draws out of a lot of ancient atmosphere. The sounds reminding me once more of Nocternity or Burzum (Even Bathory) the track serves once again as a perfect example of how black metal SHOULD sound. The whole composition, atmosphere and attitude just seem to remind me of first hearing great demos from Celticmoon, Moonblood, Isvind and Cherusker.
Truly a project which stands out from the dross and tired projects and bands that seems to do everything to fit the mould with clinical compositions and "safe" attitudes. Empire of Tharaphita truly shine (as do Mooncitadel) in times of rampant mediocrity.

Blood Stronghold - Blood Spilt in the Earth's Viscera - 7'' - Witches Sabbath

Blood Stronghold is a two piece who have existed for a few years. Both members are very active in numerous projects which are all exceptional projects. Blood Stronghold is another project which certainly has not received the accolade it deserves.
This 7'' EP was the second release from the duo after "The Imnmortal Past" demo.
The track on side a "Blood Spilt in the Earth's Viscera" Starts off with a beating war drum and a almost dreamlike clean guitar. The song then begins again with the distorted guitar. The sound and mix of the track is very ethereal and surreal. The vocals sound closest to a darken-esq mid-range "croak" of sorts. The melody present is fantastic and brings a whole new dimension to the music (once again) making the production very ethereal. There's a section with clean guitars (drenched in effects) which really brings to mind the image of a tribe sitting by the fire recounting their fables of battle.. Side b "Dying Flame of a Pale Sun" emerges almost as a ghost of battle re-invoked to go back to war. There's a great (almost) uplifting aura about this track (musically)
Again, the vocals almost "croak" and never really come too far into the mix to upset the overall sound. The riffs here are drenched in atmosphere, clouded, mysterious and captivating. The atmosphere of the whole track is very prideful and warlike, the overall sound so captivating and epic. The section late on in the track reminds me somewhat of Viking era Bathory with chorus-esq sung vocals. The song continues on and a whole range of feelings creep into the mix.
Overall an excellent EP only lacks a lyric sheet which would definitely have been interesting to read while listening to the tracks for a greater insight into the whole structure of what Blood Stronghold is trying to purvey.

CULTUS

CULTUS are a band from The Netherlands that have existed for around 16 years. How has the journey been so far Arjan?

The journey is never-ending, and with help and dedication of others, it's been good and only getting better. What can I say? I started somewhere around '98 so it's been a while longer. Learn from other peoples' mistakes so don't make them yourself, and carve out your own path.

For me "A Seat in Valhalla" is a massively underrated record.
What are your opinions of this record when looking back to those days of composing and recording the record?

Thanks, I am honoured to hear that. When I look back to this album, this one plus the one before are the ones that kind of shaped my sound and my style of riffs. The feeling I got when I first came up with some of the riffs on those tapes were determinative for my path. When I get that same feeling again nowadays, whether it's when writing and recording new material or when performing for an audience, I know I'm creating pure music that expresses what I want to. This is highly emotional and looking back, that never changed a single bit.

The "so-called" underground seems to harbor a lot of crybabies, liberal retards and bandwagon jumpers. Do you feel Facebook (and the like) is to "blame" of these kind of people? Or do you think there's always been an issue with these clowns?

Nothing changes in the underground. People asked those questions twenty years ago already and I still don't care about people in the underground. There are hundreds of profiteers, idiots, jews, bootleggers, people with double agendas, etc, and I find it excellent to not waste my time on those people. Personally I hardly use Facebook, I just post some news and that's it - I do not participate in online discussions. Facebook definately contributes to the problem, simply because this platform is used so much. And it is not comparable to old-fashioned ways of communication, such as telephone and letters, because it is open to the public: litterally the whole world can read and contribute to discussions. And because humans are easily impressed with a nice, well-presented story instead of common sense and facts, it is very easy to manipulate thousands or millions of people with a few simple posts or lines.

What equipment do you use when recording with CULTUS? Digital? Analogue?

The recordings are basically just improvised on low budget stuff. I mean the recording process, not the songs itself. Everything so far is recorded in whatever available rehearsal room or some attic, then mixed at home in my studio. I don't need productions of 10.000+ euro. The most important is having skills to actually play, and then have some decent mics so you can hear everything. I have been working as mixing and mastering engineer for tons of bands for 10-15 years so I have some experience and know what I like. I don't like the sterile surroundings of pro studios, it's like going to a dentist. I need to record alone.

Can you explain the lyrical subjects covered and explored in CULTUS?

Travelling. Wandering. Being. Abandoned places. Hatred and disgust versus moments of solitude and introvert exhilaration.

You run the label HEIDENS HART which has been a long running label (assumingly quite successful too?) When did the idea first come to you that running a label would be an idea? Was the label born to release your own CULTUS records?

Yes correct, the label was originally born around '98 or '99 to release the first Cultus tape. I figured it would be smart to already have the name out there and have a small mailorder running before the release, so I started building a small stock while the first Cultus was still being written.

The label was started as a hobby which grew to proportions I would and could have never imagined. From a time consuming point of view, it is more than a full time job. It's more a 24/7 job. However, you could say it is still a hobby because I would never want to see black metal as a foundation to pay the bills. Because I don't rely on the label financially, there are no compromises needed and I am not constantly looking for the next hypes, gimmicks and trends that sell. And I don't view running the label as "work" or "daytime job", so there is no drag in my daily routine - even though I am working every free minute on it. There are others who are even proud to say they are living of running a black metal label, but at the end of the day they are selling a musical throw-away product in the form of modern black metal to teenagers, to pay their bills. Luckily not me and that will never be. Heidens Hart is the distribution backbone of Cultus and I am a musician and egoist creator in the first place.

Which bands that you hear these days do you like and support? What is your opinion of the Dutch "scene"?

I don't know, I am not so interested to discover new bands. Most new bands and youngsters are x-th generation clones of clones. Dutch scene is fine, underground black metal concerts organized by me and my allies are usually very well attended over here.

I see you have recently re-worked "A Seat in Valhalla" with new recordings, titles and information. Why was this?

I was just fed up with hearing that annoying drumcomputer and the unsatisfying overall sound. During all those years after the release of the original tape and CD, I "added" melodies in my head. I have always liked the songs - as I said, these were the riffs that came to be the sound of Cultus - but couldn't listen to them anymore. I thought they were uncompleted ideas, rough and unfinished, recorded under sub-optimal conditions, and I just thought they deserved to recorded, sounding in a way where it would be bearable for myself to listen to it, and with the new elements added.

Could you name 5 records that inspired you most?

Anthems to the welkin at dusk
Storm of the light's bane
Distant in solitary night
Drawing down the moon
Supreme immortal art
Bergtatt/Nattens madrigal/Vargnatt demo (I can't choose!)
In no particular order. Anyway, the answer to this question changes every day.

Any future plans for CULTUS?

"*Gezeteld in zegerbinen*" was basically a re-written, re-recorded album. Before that, the latest release was done in 2008, the split LP with Meslamtaea. After that I started writing new material for a brand new full-length. The writing is now entering its final phase, demos are recorded and lyrics finalized. I hope to record at the end of this year. Release next year, plus there are a lot of requests for shows so who knows which ones we'll do.

The last words are yours…

Fuck off to fast food black metal. Cultus is black hateful metal.

Eisenwinter - Reichswinter - 7'' - Supremacy Through Intolerance

Eisenwinter is a one man project of the main composer Herr Greif. And "Reichswinter" was originally released on cassette in 1999. Side a Begins with "Machtergreifung" (Seizure of Power) which is an intro track. The song begins with a very grandiose set of strings and timpani. Instantly there's a great atmosphere setting the pace for what is to come. Track two "Krieg & Sieg" begins with a ferocious blastbeat which reminds me somewhat of Godless North or Moonblood. The production is clear yet very loose and the playing is raw and without frills. There's some great atmosphere here and the riffs work perfectly well together. Nothing here lets up and the song title "War and Victory" begins to make total sense. For me this is probably the best Eisenwinter track I have ever heard. Side b starts with "Todesturm" (Death Storm) and again, Eisenwinter does for the jugular. The riffs sound very "icy" and "feral". This time there's some Polish sounding influence in the track. The whole sound is perfect for this short but effective demo. The two tracks (plus intro/outro) however leave me wishing this was a 10'' or 12'' record since the material is fantastic. The last track on side b "Blutrichtung" (Blood Direction) is an epic piece which sounds very militaristic and martial. The length of the songs featured on this EP being the only downfall. Eisenwinter have never been one of my more favored bands but this 7'' really serves as something to look back on for European black metal. The work on this EP is better than 99% of the current tripe being released by labels today.

Ichor - Για την νίκη που θα 'ρθει - Cassette - Avalon Hellas

Ichor were a Greek two piece project who only ever released this one demo "Για την νίκη που θα 'ρθει" (For the Victory That Will Come) Both members were active in The Shadow Order & Kaiadas (plus a few other projects) It's certainly a shame no more Ichor material ever came to be.
The first track "Σαν γείρει η νύχτα πάνω μας" (As the Night Draws Upon Us) starts off with a mid-paced beat and a very simple riff. The production is very raw and demo-like. This sounds like there has been no tampering with the mix in some expensive studio. The vocals are quite high/forward in the mix but not too much where it's distracting. The sound (as mentioned above) is very raw and probably from a live rehearsal. There's definitely an element of Kaiadas here ...there's a real "no frills" element to the recording. There's a lot of atmosphere here too, considering how raw this is there seems to be something really interesting. Unfortunately the song is very short and the track really ends before it's really got underway. The second track "Πύρινη ομίχλη" (Fire Fog) gets underway with some obscure vocals and a blast beat. The guitar sounds like a razor wire cutting through skin. There's again a great atmosphere here which really over-rides the rather basic playing. That aside, this is how black metal should sound (at-least in my opinion) The whole sound just sounds like two devoted individuals and an old tape recorder or four tracker. The compositions are nice but maybe tidied up a little bit could have been REALLY special. The second track ends and again it's just a shame that the song did not have more sections and variation. Albeit, this IS a demo tape so it's all just a demonstration. (Unfortunately their only demo) Track three "Για την νίκη που θα 'ρθει" (For the Victory That will come) starts off with a clean guitar that invokes the aura of ancient battle.. If there's any negatives about this demo it's the length and the fact the demo did not yield further recordings from Ichor. The positives are that the demo displays something that collectors can look back on and remember this was an addition to the Greek NS "scene" back a few years ago.
If you are a fan of Kaiadas, The Shadow Order, Wolfnacht, Saturno, Higernacht, Der Sturmer or Alastor, Bannerwar etc… then this tape will serve as a great reminder that there were a lot of bands from the late 90's/00's that were creating something completely against the "clean" sound which was being used by a lot of bands back then.

Necrostrigis - Hosts of Fullmoon Forces - Cassette - Werewolf Promotion.

Necrostrigis are a fairly long lived and very productive project from Poland.
Their sound has never been "clean" or "Safe" and they have always played Black Metal in the old 90's vein.
Necrostrigis (at-least in my opinion) are an underrated band which deserves far more support than what they actually get. This serves however as no surprise is the so-called "scene" of hipster record flippers and trend hoppers. "Hosts of Fullmoon Forces..." begins with track one "Intro" which begins with a warlike scream …an odd torturous scene from a movie it seems. (I have no idea what movie)
Track two "Temple of Murderous Shadows" begins with a thin tremolo riff which instantly reminds me of Veles. The production may be thin but the sound is clear and thick. The vocals sound completely fitting to the carnage of the first track. The whole atmosphere just echoes Veles in my mind. (This is always a great "thing") There's a totally ancient darkness to the sound of Necrostrigis which sounds completely insane, fanatical and authentic. The song really shows no "let up" as Necrostrigis seemingly invoke the spirit of the past.
Track two "Sabbath of the Damned Dead"(Dark Woods of Necrorituals part I)begins with a riff which would not have sounded out of place of De Mysteries Dom Sathanas. Necrostrigis just bring so much energy to their sound. The vocals once more just take the whole recording away from this being a band just going through the motions! The sound is crazed and the riff really brings out a fantastic atmosphere. Wolfvampyr's drumming and vocals just display a man with a great deal of passion in his craft. There's an archaic sound reminiscent of Maniac Butcher, Veles, Burzum and Mayhem (as mentioned above) Also Mysteries, Graveland and a few other names.
Track four "Possessed by the Cult of Night" starts off with a clean folk-esq riff which soon descends into a chaotic blast-beat and tremolo riff. The riffs again invoke a bizarre medieval atmosphere helped by the crazed vocals of Wolfvampyr. It's evident that Necrostrigis influences spawn from a few of the old circles of the 90's. Necrostrigis certainly bring their own ideas to the table while paying homage to the great bands from the 90's. Again, the pace is furious and so too is the spirit of the song. The track seems to weave in and out of a few well gelled together riffs that just show Necrostrigis at their best here. Track five "Mysteries of the Horned Fullmoon" then begins with a tremolo riff which again would not have sounded out of place on any of those classic Norwegian or polish classic from back in the 90's. The vocals AGAIN just work as an assault!! The riffs seem to just meld so perfectly and it's clear that song writing (as well as atmosphere) is top priority of Necrostrigis. The general sound from Necrostrigis actually displays something rarely found on records which are that they encompass attitude over fancy bullshit. There are too many records in the last few years that either sound contrived OR so clean it's hard to call these records "Black Metal" records. Necrostrigis bring something almost lost in times of posing on social media sites or having some retarded "internet" fan-base. Their music does the talking and their attitude and ideas shine through. The tracks on this demo sound exciting and not tired songs that fit a record for the sake of being there. Necrostrigis are one of the new who still encompass the TRUE spirit of black metal. The demo ends with the track "Outro" which again sounds seemingly lifted from an old horror film. The wind sweeping across the landscape really brings the atmosphere of an almost Vampyric terror roaming the land. The track ends with an obscure scream of sorts. Overall this demo serves as a reminder than black metal still lives in the hearts of the few…

Aryan Blood / Evil - Ancient Empire - Split Cassette - Gates to Valhalla

Aryan Blood and Evil are both longstanding projects from two underground devotees.
This cassette version was originally released on a 7'' EP via Einsatzkommando in 2005.
Side a opens with "Ancient Empire" by Aryan Blood. This song was apparently recorded in December 1996 but never released. The track gets underway with an almost thrash-esq riff. That soon dies down and in comes a tremolo riff and blast beat. The whole song sounds loose and raw, somewhat bringing to mind something Veles might have done some years back (or even Ildjarn , or Moonblood) The song works around a few catchy riffs that really capture the essence of what black metal used to sound like.
The track serves as a reminder that Widar really knows how to create something just as important as Bilksirnir. The song ends with a marching drum section and riff.
Evil's side "A Southern War From the Winters' March" is a track recorded (and unreleased) from 1997. I have always preferred what Evil did back in the 90's rather than their later works and the "DT Collections" or "Pagan Fury" is highly advised to those interested in black metal totally alien to the current shitty "scene" The track starts with a very raw production which sounds like an old rehearsal recording. The first section instantly reminds me of Burzum and Varg's old work.
The 2nd riff then reminds me more of Moonblood/Darkthrone with the tremolo riff and blast beat. The track works perfectly with two strong sections. A third soon comes to the fore and breaks away from the first two riffs. The riffs are simple yet effective.
The fourth riff slows down the pace a little and there's certainly a more militant aura to this section.

Hamergilde - Weerwolf - Cassette - Self release/Heidens Hart Records

Hamergilde are a fairly unknown band from Holland who actually formed back in 2000. There's been quite an amount of "radio silence" with the project and it seems that 2018 was to bring about a full length tape entitled "Weerwolf" which the reputable Dutch label Heidens Hart distributed only a few months ago. Track one "Wir Rufen Deine Wolfe" (an old folk song, I do believe) gets things underway. From the off it's clear that there's a martial element to Hamergilde's sound. The production is quite clear and crisp. The vocals are more in the vein of old Der Sturmer, Command (lower end vocally than many other black metal bands) Also to note: Bilskirnir covered this song also (At a completely different pace and tempo) Track two "Fur Sieg und Tod" starts with a nice mid-paced riff which is basically an RAC riff (with folky tones) this is certainly inspired by Absurd, Bilskirnir (also various RAC bands) as is mentioned in the Hamergilde interview I conducted with Odal. Track three "Der Stolz des Nordlands" then begins with a simple riff which again sounds like a riff which could have been on many records from Absurd, Bilskirnir or the like. The flow of the songs may be simple but it's very effective and the songs leave their mark. The last track on side a of the tape is entitled " Mijn eigen God" which begins with a darker folk riff which is soon aided by a double bass drum and tremolo riff. The vocals again are lower end and really work perfectly here. The riffs present on this track (and tape, overall) really gel perfectly together to create very simple yet interesting tracks. Side b begins with the track "Bloed In de Sneeuw" which is a Countess cover song. The track serves as a nice cover-song which has Hamergilde's stamp all over it. Track six "Herr Des Kriegers" then begins with the pace being picked up quite a lot. This reminds me of Der Sturmer somewhat with the riff idea and drum combination. Track seven "De Weerwolf" start out with a tremolo riff which somewhat invokes an aura of Burzum (in the riff) which is interesting for sure. Odal seems to know how to write a riff (where not complicated) the ideas seem to bond together perfectly. There's again a massive nod to Absurd, Der Sturmer, Bilskirnir and even Graveland (although not quite as "epic") The whole production is perfect for this release asides from bass which seems to be almost missing in the mix which I believe could have lifted the tracks a little. The last track "Outro" is an ambient piece which seems to invoke an aura of desolation...as if things have come to an end. (Makes sense, of-course) a rather sombre affair considering the rest of the demo seems to focus more (musically) on pride, strength & power (or at-least to my ears)

Azelsgard - Confraternity of Lawlessness - CD - Frost & Fire / Totenkopf Propaganda

Azelsgard have never been a band to leave their roots behind (The Polish scene from the 90's) they've continued to make black metal how it SHOULD sound.
"Confraternity of Lawlessness" is another fine example of a band doing things without the pressure of "modern" values, without the aim at getting a new "friends request" but making (and therefore doing) what it is they want to do!! This release was originally released on cassette by Forestkult Promotion (Loki's own label) Track one "Przebudzenie arktycznego zla" (Awakening of the Arctic Evil) works as an intro track which uses "the thing" soundtrack originally used by the masterful
Ennio Morricone (Who also did some of the great Spaghetti western soundtracks) which I'm a fan of the intro sets the tone to the macabre madness that will soon ensue. Track two "Niesiemy martwe spustoszenie" (We Bringing the Dead Havoc) which begins frantically ... The aura building until the song turns into a chaotic onslaught. From the off I am reminded of Necrostrigis, Veles and Graveland. The track has literally no let-up and just proves that there still is Polish black metal that is unclean and maniacal. Track three "Bractwo bezprawia" (Confraternity of lawlessness) begins again with a blast beast and crazed assault from Loki. The song changes from section to section which really shows that the riffs work perfectly together. The bassline (beneath the madness) works perfectly. (Bass being an overlooked instrument in black metal it seems?) There's an interesting "youthful" atmosphere on this CD which again makes me think of those old great demos and records from the 90's. Track four "Wilczy hak" (Wolf Hook) starts with a very old Norwegian sounding riff which could well have been lifted from an old Ulver recording back in the 90's. This certainly sounds like one of the better devised tracks from Azelsgard. This really could have been lifted from an old demo from the 90's. There's something about this track that just makes me want to hear more. As with "Luciferian Supreme Darkness" review (at the end) I mentioned that it would be great to hear a full length record from Azelsgard!! What more can be said about Azelsgard?

Necrostrigis - Swamp Cults & Lunar Necromancy - Cassette - Werewolf P/Sabbath's Fire

Necrostrigis are a band from Poland raising high the flag of the old 90's scene in sound, attitude and aesthetics. That being said, the main member Wolfvampyr is certainly no newcomer to metal with his longevity displayed in Venedae, Hatenwar and a few other projects from back in the 90's.
The demo begins with "Endless Dark War" which begins with an old film sample and some tribal sounding war drums. The riff plays a melodic folk-esq riff which soon turns into a distorted folk riff. The song turns into a chaotic intro of such. The second track "Times of Archaic Alliance" which starts off with a tremolo riff which wouldn't have sounded out of place on "Hateful Black Metal" by Veles. The 2nd riff (as I have mentioned previously with Necrostrigis) seems to always serve the first riff perfectly. There are definitely elements of the old Nordic masters in the riffs here ...these riffs could have been lifted from Mayhem back when "De Mysteriis..." was being created. Soon after we are greeted by the Death March riff and the song slows down. Soon after the track picks up pace once more and the song takes a re-route back through the track. Track three "Cursed Dead Marshes" begins with an intro of spoken word which soon turns into a mid-paced riff. The vocals come to the fore in the mix. The vocals this time not sounding as maniacal as usually heard from Wolfvampyr.(albeit, they are very fitting) the song again works around a few riffs and sections which really work together. It's fairly evident Necrostrigis are not a band aiming at creating anything that could really be considered "modern" the influences are glaringly obvious. Track four "Jesus' Tod" is a cover song of the Burzum classic from the album "Filosofem" Where Necrostrigis are clearly influenced by Burzum it's good to hear a band as such bring their own identity to the cover song. If there is one thing to note it's that Necrostrigis DO have an identity. The last track "Grave Cavern (Hunting For Blood) begins with a bizarre distorted organ sound which really brings to mind Nosferatu, or at-least an old haunted castle and the feeling or foreboding terror. Soon after, a riff emerges from the silent darkness which is followed by a maniacal vocal performance of Wolfvampyr. It's once again clear that Necrostrigis are not holding back or going through the motions. This track again works around a few very steady riffs which just seem to meld together perfectly. Necrostrigis AGAIN prove with this tape that they are one (or were) one of the finer underground bands to carry the torch from the old times.

Old Forest - Of Mists and Graves / The Kingdom of Darkness - Cassette - Tour de Garde

Old Forest is an underrated black metal band from England who played a stripped down form of black metal. Their sound (especially on these demos) was very close to a good amount of the Old Norse stuff that influenced them. For me they have always been an interesting band and when TDG re-released these old demos on one tape it was certainly a well needed release. Side a features the "Of Mists and Graves" demo/promo from 1998.
Side b features "The Kingdom of Darkness" demo from 98.

Side a starts with a track entitled "Hammer of the Underworld" which begins with a blast beat and a very nice riff that sounds like it could have been lifted from an old demo of Enslaved or Mayhem. From the very off it is clear what Old Forest were about and who it was they were inspired by in the early days of the band. For a beginning track this is a very strong song. Track two "Death in the Cemetery" also begins perfectly. There's a great melodic keyboard lead that really stands out in the second riff. You can hear in this track some aspects of Burzum influence for sure. The mix and production on this demo is also fantastic and perfect for a record, let alone a demo tape. For me, it's very clear that Old Forest knew what they were doing when they recorded this demo; it's a very well-crafted release. (And I'm only two tracks into the tape) Track three "Shadow Whispers" starts with a fast paced riff and drum beat which sounds (once more) like it could have been on an old Enslaved demo possibly. Vocals come once more to the fore and serve the riffs perfectly. The mix is (as mentioned above) very appealing and the listener can hear everything that is present in the tracks. "Shadow Whispers" serves as the shortest track on the demo and possibly the weakest track. Something seemed missing from the track. Track four "The Deepest Caves" begins with an obscure electronic rumbling and a spoken piece from Kobold. "Of Mists and Graves" ends and I'm left wanting more. The first two tracks were very strong but the last two just did not live up to the first two tracks. The demo turned out to be very short after all. I suppose however that "Of Mists and Graves" was a promo tape so in turn, maybe this should be taken into account. Side b features "The Kingdom of Darkness" demo which features four tracks also. Track one "Where Tress are Withered" starts with a fast paced "punk" beat which soon descends into chaos. The riffs are very interesting (simple. But interesting) and the track remains interesting throughout. Track two "To Haunt the Old Forest" begins with an upbeat drumbeat and a great riff. The song sways between a few interesting sections which perfectly capture a feeling of darkness. Track three "Hymn of the Deep" starts with a very dark build up which seems to capture a very ancient haunted aura. The track (much like "To Haunt…") sways between a few simple (yet effective) riffs. The overall compositions on this demo are fantastic and effective. Track four "Become the Gods of War" again has a very driven sound which seems well rehearsed and well performed. Overall the demos on this cassette show Old Forest at their peak.

Hunok - Megrendithetetlenség - CD - Werewolf Records

Hunok are a band from Hungary who surfaced many years back with rather obscure ambient-folk music.
Their sound has always been interesting and their records are loaded with character, atmosphere and spirit.
"Megrendithetetlenség" is the first black metal recording from Hunok (excluding the track featured on the split 7'' with Bilskirnir) which was a great track that embodied the worship of the TTF bands from the 90's. Hunok however isn't just a band that is set out to emulate TTF BUT it certainly shows that there's clear (and obvious) influences from those glorious bands. "Megrendithetetlenség" was in the making for many years and Gabor seemed not to be the quickest man to "get on with it" so it seems. BUT like the old saying goes "Good things come to those who wait" and never more was that evident than with this record. Track one "Bevezető" is an ambient piece which certainly cements the atmosphere in a matter of moments. A repetitive and brooding "beat" (that sits somewhat in the backgroud) has a very warlike quality. The horn resonating too .sounding like a call to war! Everything here captures something I can only imagine in the dark ages in a desolate land. What an opener this track serves to be ...acting as an opening for the onslaught of what is to soon come. Track two "Hadur" then opens with a jangling raw guitar which soon leads into the drumbeat and first riff of the song. The bass is fantastic hear and perfectly audible, the raw guitar sound just adds a layer of dirt onto the whole sound which seems to just create more atmosphere. There's a whole host of layers on this record and the song sounds like it was worked on to purvey the atmosphere.
Winterheart's drumming is impressive and really brings out the riffs and atmosphere. The playing overall is very impressive and it's clear nods to the old TTF are apparent but not un-settling at-all.
Track three "Örök Körforgás" begins with a folky lead guitar and then descends into something Graveland might have made many years back. It's clear that (as mentioned above) the influence is there but there seems to be outside influences from the Norse bands too... there seems to be influence from Enslaved, Satyricon, Burzum and the like. Albeit, Hunok aren't a one trick pony and (excluding the obvious influences) Hunok manage to bring something fresh to proceedings. The compositions (albeit not musically complicated) are very interesting with riffs swerving in and out and creating new dynamics and ideas. (Something Graveland did with their classic records)
Track four "Hajdani Harcosok" really does sound like it was lifted from "Thousand Swords" The drumming however being vastly better from Winterheart. This track does serve as homage to Graveland, There's no way around it or denying the influence here. Track five "Végcél" begins with a riff which has a fantastic atmosphere about it. The second part fo the first riff just brings out even more of the warlike qualities features throughout the record. The next riff (after a moment's silence) is once again a fantastic riff which brings out an aura of medieval battle. Once again the bass is perfectly sitting in the mix. The drumming remains steady with elements of flair even. The guitar tone is fantastic and the layered keys and effects just add to the mix perfectly. One again, it's evident where Hunok's influences come from ...Track six is a cover song of Evil (Brazil) with an old track of theirs "Blood And War". The old Evil material was always great and in my mind massively overlooked. The song works perfectly as homage to the old Brazilian legion. Track seven "Megtorlás" was the same track that featured on the split EP with Bilskirnir some years back. This time the track has been re-recorded with more layers. If you have heard the original this version serves as a fresh reminder of that track. If you have not heard the original it's certainly interesting to hear the difference in the recordings. As ever Hunok brings a lot of character and atmosphere to the recording and seems to invoke those ancient spirits which now seem lost on today's decadent modern world.
The last track "Kivezető" is an ambient piece once again by Hunok which (once again) reminds me of the desolate hillsides after the battle. There's a brooding element of doom but also "calm" to the madness that seems to have ensued prior. What can be said about "Megrendithetetlenség"? It's not the most original album ever created BUT it summons up the feeling of a lost sound when black metal seemed to be impulsive, creative and devoid of the scene politics and bullshit! The riff are memorable (just as they were back on those classic records) and the aura, atmosphere and spirit is still there in this record.

Agarthia - Between Eiglophian Mountains - Cassette - Avalon Hellas Productions

Agarthia was a project of Saturno (Ravenbanner, Higernacht, Alastor)
The tape was released by Avalon Hellas Production in 2001.
Saturno has always had a very unique sound to his music and it's always been apparent that what it was he did create was never the "norm" with seemingly cheap gear and a very lo-fi production on the releases.
Track one "Wrath of the Gods" starts proceedings with a very raw buzzing guitar and a drum computer/machine. The closest sound I could possibly associate the recording with would be a very bizarre BBH recording from the 90's. As mentioned above there is pretty much zero production to these recordings and the whole sound is very obscure and low-fi. The vocals sound like Saturno was recording against a howling wind somewhere in the dark forest! (Superb) Something here also reminds me of the ice cold production featured on Old Wainds "Where the Snows are Never Gone" (which evidentially is one of my favourite releases) Saturno seems to channel that vicious and cold sound into his almost "anti-production" on this release. What is evident is that the first track works majorly on atmosphere over musical ability or "fitting in" to make a recording sound plastic, lifeless and accessible. This, in turn, does the exact opposite which I am assuming was Saturno's vision from the start.
Track two ""As Northstar Lights My Path" begins with an obscure string intro which only serves to add atmosphere to the demo within 30 seconds of the second track. The riff soon evolves into something reminiscing of Burzum (somewhat) There seems to be pan pipes in the background to the fuzzed out riff which sits so well in the mix. The song soon descends into a chaotic fervour which again invokes the feeling of Old Wainds, Burzum and the BBH records from years ago. The riffs seem to meld into a cacophony of sound ...there's even an aura of Paysage d'Hiver (Albeit, rawer) which seems to come from the vocals and overall feeling/atmosphere. The whole sound just invokes the feeling of a desolate winter landscape and a lone soul wandering across the snow covered fields with the wind tearing apart the landscape. (Perfectly describing the title of the demo itself)
To fully describe the sound of this track (and the demo) would not fully do the cassette justice...it has to be heard to be understood. Track three "The Legions of Pride" starts proceedings with a raw and fuzzed out guitar riff which soon find its pace at mid-tempo. Once again, Saturno's vocals sound like a man climbing a hill in a windstorm! The drums soon descend into a chaotic blastbeat and once again I am reminded somewhat of the old BBH bands from Russia who seemed to capture the atmosphere of their homeland so well. Greece may not be the place to imagine for a hyperborean ice storm but Agarthia seems to capture that image perfectly (sonically, of-course) Once again, Agarthia seem to provide what is fitting to the mind of Saturno in his bizarre (yet, fitting) music to the ancient times. There seems to be some influence here (somewhat) of Branikald's "Stormheit" in some of the patterns.
The last track (four) "Creatures Into the Woods" sets the tone with a spoken piece with someone talking about the wolf being a companion of man. The song then evolves into a clean picked guitar riff over a spoken piece with a beating pulse. This bizarre almost "folk-esq" piece seems to capture the aura of a roaming creature through the darkness of night! The rhythmic "building" of the track makes you un-certain if the track will descend into chaos or stay as a rhythmic "pulse" for the added obscurities that seem to thrive on this piece. To fully describe "Between Eiglophian Mountains" would certainly not do the demo justice (as mentioned above) Albeit, what could be said is that there's NO ONE making music like this anymore that seems to capture such atmospheres. Sure, the sound may not be accessible to people expecting things clinical or clean AND the production could be considered an "issue" to a good amount of people who proclaim to listen to Black Metal. Is this record perfect? Absolutely not!! Does it capture something that sounds authentic? Yes! Agarthia ceased to exist many years ago (which is a shame) since I believe that there could have been more obscure fortunes somewhere that seemingly are buried by time and dust.

Morgennebel - Remembrance to the Source of Power- Cassette - Hate Work

Morgennebel is a pretty much unknown band from the USA who is playing a style of black metal which is stripped down, primitive and raw. For me their sound sits somewhere between Evil, Satanic Warmaster, Vlad Tepes and that (always welcomed) touch of RAC for good measure. The first song on this demo "Heathen Winds Will Rage" starts proceedings with a nice "catchy" riff which leads into a simple stomping 4/4 beat. The riffs here are nice and memorable (yet simple) which is perfect. The riffs have a folk-ish aura to them and there seems to be influence from Isengard or Storm maybe!!? The vocals are mid ranged and sit nicely in the mix. This first track seems to work around a few simple ideas that are performed nicely by the sole member.
Track two "Donar Cast a Storm Upon My Spirit" starts off with a clean jangling guitar (very folky) There's also elements of old Absurd or Graveland here too. The track shortly dies off and acts as a nice interlude track.
The third track "For a Thought of Beauty Held" again comes in with a riff which cements the sound. There's clear influences from some of the old RAC bands and the black metal bands that incorporate RAC into their sound (and folk) there's some real spirit in this performance too ...very simple, but very interesting work. The last track " Drawing Sword to Skies of War" starts again with a catchy riff which displays again a raw folk/punk aspect to the recording. The tape shortly ends and I'm left wanting to hear more.
This tape is limited to just 30 copies...hopefully in the future there will be more available Morgennebel material.

Ultima Thule - Enthralling Lunar Majesty - Cassette - Shadow Kingdom

Ultima Thule is a project from both members of Blood Tyrant. It seems both members are very comfortable working together since both members work together on a multitude of projects.
The first track "Remnants of Burning Empire" begins with a timpani and a mellow keyboard phrase. Soon comes the cracking of fire and the low-end sung chanting vocals. This intro certainly sets the pace for things to come.
Track two "Enthralling Lunar Majesty" then surfaces from the mire of mist. The riffs have a great raw quality which shines through. It's clear the inspiration here seems to be Graveland, Legion and a whole host of other bands. There may even be some inspiration from the Greek scene (Or maybe it's my ears?) albeit, the bulk of inspiration seems to come from there Polish and Norwegian sounds of the 90's. For the first track this is sure an impressive start. Track three "Oerouden" begins with a great riff which invokes a fantastic aura. The vocals once more sit nicely into the mix and the rest of the instruments are well fitted. The keyboard serves as a nice addition to the mix bringing out the riffs even more. The general aura on this demo is fantastic and really seems to evoke an ancient feel seemingly lost in a lot of recordings today. Track four "Pagan Forces" begins proceedings with a riff that instantly reminds me of Graveland. The ferocity of the song really never wanes. It's clear to hear what Ultima Thule are doing (and they are doing it well) There's even that youthful attitude in this recording ...things sound a little "off the cuff" NOT contrived or washed over with pristine production or clinical nonsense. Track five "Ignite the Pyres of Blood Vengeance" then begins with a mid-paced riff and drum beat that somewhat (again) reminds me of Graveland or Satanic Warmaster. The riffs are far from technical but do their job perfectly.
The compositions on this demo are very impressive (where clearly not technical) they work on simplistic ideas and draw out the atmosphere over the nonsense. Track six "Servants of War" begins with a ferocious riff and an interesting intro!! The track soon evolves into a darkened macabre (and chaotic) piece of work. The riffs present seem to bond well together and it seems apparent that the two members work very well together. Unfortunately the song fades off just a few minutes in ...It would be great to hear this song re-recorded sometime for Ultima Thule.
The last track "...And They Disappeared in the Night" for me summons something which for me makes me think of Luguburz era Summoning or even later era Graveland.

Forbidden Temple - Demo II - Cassette - Medieval Prophecy Records

Forbidden Temple is a newer act from Belgium who I believe to be one of the most interesting bands around right now in 2018. FT really do seem like a band who have captured something that many these days have almost abandoned in exchange for clinical/plastic production which (again, in my opinion) is completely alien to black metal. Track one "Intro" begins with wind sweeping, a subtle keyboard and the howling of wolves. (Almost sounds like something Graveland would have had as an intro back in 1993)
Track two "Forbidden Temple" then begins with a fuzzy riff which instantly brings to mind Fullmoon "United Aryan Evil" what a pleasant surprise. The almost "buried" production just adds so much charm and character to this release already! It seems there's a massive nod to Fullmoon, Graveland and Behemoth mostly. The riffs are simplistic and raw, Devoid of wankery and nonsense. The keys just add another layer to the claustrophobic and basic "production" Which is (intended or not) actually one of the demos greatest strengths. Any band can go into a studio and get some engineer to make their record sound like Cradle of Filth (If the money is there) but to actually leave something natural and almost "un-mixed" takes a bit of thought. Don't get me wrong, you can hear what is going on here but the overall atmosphere just makes this stand out more that it's a basic home recording rather than it being contrived or made to sound a certain way. This is black metal how it SHOULD sound in 2018. (Again, just my opinion)
Track three "Forgotten Witchcraft" begins with a simple riff which again brings to mind Graveland or maybe this time Burzum, Fullmoon or Mysteries. The 2nd riff soon takes charge and the drums enter. It's pretty apparent of these guys' influences and there's no denying that the riffs are inspired by the 2nd wave bands coming from Poland or Norway. Once again the "buried" production actually adds to the atmosphere of the demo and "Forgotten Witchcraft" goes along nicely with a few simple (yet effective) riffs. Once again, there seems a massive nod to Fullmoon's "United Aryan Evil" which was my first thought once hearing the demo for the first time. The vocals are mid-range, very Darken-esq, staying in their place and not going too far astray.
Track four "Interlude" starts off with a war drum and a "clean" guitar (once again, reminding me of Fullmoon/Graveland) the interlude end's after only a minute or so which is a shame since I feel that FT could have maybe built a few of these interludes (at2-3 minutes) around the tracks. The last track "The Purity of Darkness" then opens up with a great riff which invokes the feeling (once again) of Behemoth, Graveland and even Fullmoon. FT for me has shown on this demo that their influences are apparent BUT they have created something of their own with these ideas. (Seemingly) two young men have done exactly what these old bands I mentioned achieved 20+ years ago and created something dark, macabre and timeless. (Ok, it's a bit too soon to judge FT or ever but them in the same bracket as bands like Graveland) but this seems to be a very interesting start to their "artistic" journeys.
Some might rubbish this as something we;'ve all heard before. Some might consider this band pointless or 25 years too late. Honestly I think this is way more needed than any album by some third rate "triangle" band or "neo-orthodox chaos gnostic liber alpha qabalah" shit we keep getting shoved down our throats!
HAILS to Forbidden Temple.

White Wolves Kommando - Our Empire of Shadows - Cassette - Self released

White Wolves Kommando were a project from Finland whose previous three demo tapes were very impressive. Their sound was different, and compared to a modern studio approach, completely archaic. On said demos, WWK sounded like they were recording on an old tape deck of sorts with maybe 1-2 microphones. (a fantastic method depending on what you want from a project/band) definitely not a modern technique though. Their sound (of-course) was never clean (nor were their lyrics or overall aesthetics) White Wolves Kommando were doing things as they choose and on their terms. This (their final demo) displays WWK with a little better production (maybe a four track?) and the songs really maintain the quality experienced on the first three demos. Track 1 "Horned Power" sets the proverbial ball rolling with a riff that would not sound out of place on a Satanic Warmaster record. It's soon very apparent as to who WWK's influences are and what it is they are doing. This is in no way "modern" and everything here acts as homage to days now passed. The riffs work perfectly together and the ideas mould together perfectly. Track two "Under the Cruel Eye" begins with a tremolo riff which once again sounds very similar to Satanic Warmaster!! The few riffs again mould perfectly well and the whole composition (albeit, simple) just creates a fantastic dark atmosphere. White Wolves Kommando is clearly not for those wanting to hear some progressive post rock black metal (or whatever trendy name it has) this is un-apologetic, raw, and as "to the point" as black metal can be.
Track three "White Wolves Warriors" starts off with a bassline/riff that has some influences with Bathory, Vlad Tepes and Celtic Frost. The riff is catchy and memorable. The pre-chorus has a blast beat section and the chorus parts work on slower and darker riff. Track four "Our Empire of Shadows" starts with a double bass drum and a mid-paced tremolo riff. The 2nd riff then descends into a more chaotic riff. The lyrics here are featured in the tape layout...

Carpathian wolves sing their song
To call the black soul to see
A kingdom of forgotten times
Our majestic empire of shadows.

Forbidden Temple/Ultima Thule - Split - CD - New Era Productions

This split CD was released this year (2018) on CD and vinyl format.
Both bands deliver a primitive style very much rooted in 90's/00's worship.
Forbidden Temple are a band with only a few demo tapes released so far ...seemingly though they have a very interesting sound which is well worthy of praise.
Ultima Thule too are a band rooted in the worship of the old style.
Featuring firstly on the disc is Forbidden Temple's "side" which features four tracks.
The first track "Intro" begins with a dark synth/keyboard lead and a dense timpani sound. Shortly into the track (what sounds like a horn/trumpet) sounds and plays a dark melody over the slow drum beat.
FT is certainly setting the tone here. The second track "Call From the Ancient Woods" begins with a primitive riff over a blast beat. This almost reminds me of demo era Emperor, Behemoth and even Graveland. The sound is perfect and devoid of that horrible clinical/lifeless sound on a lot of modern black metal records. The whole atmosphere just brings the tracks into another dimension. It's very refreshing to hear a younger band play this "style" of black metal which is not trying to be overly complicated nor jumping on any bandwagon. Many people 10-15 years back would have called this "clone" this or that...NONSENSE! This is far more interesting and has far more about it than 90% of what is being released and hyped to the max by labels. Track three "Arrival of Pagan Flames" starts with a riff which would not have sounded out of place on a Vlad Tepes demo!! The keys however take this more into the territory of Emperor, Graveland or even Fullmoon. It seems evident once more that FT are not interested in "progression" but would rather add elements and atmosphere to simplistic ideas. The vocals sit nicely in the mix, the somewhat "crunchy" guitar tone flows perfectly and the slightly distorted drum sound just adds to the whole sound. "Arrival..." certainly follows where "Call..." began.
The last track from FT "Massacre Winds" starts with a riff AGAIN that reminds me of the old Polish hordes. There's also some of old Emperor, Satyricon and a few others in here. More-so in atmosphere than riff style. The song works around a few basic riffs which work perfectly and just go to show that atmosphere overrides technical nonsense. The last segment to the track reminds me most of Fullmoon (or Graveland) and the song fades off into the ether. Perfect!!
Ultima Thule's side begins with "The Howling Fog" which opens with a rather dark doom laden piece invoking the darkness of medieval times. The song soon opens and I'm reminded of Graveland, Satyricon and Infernum (Fullmoon, Graveland etc...) NOW this is how black metal should sound in 2018. The vocals are superb..Very darken-esq. It's very apparent that UT's influences seem to be the Norse and Polish bands from the 90's. Truly a fantastic opening track for Ultima Thule.
The second track "False Light Dies In Their Eyes" begins with a blast beat and fast tremolo riff. Instantly (again) I can't help but think of Graveland , Infernum , Fullmoon and once more the old Scandinavian legends from the 90's. The song shortly breaks up into a synth lead section which seemingly brings calm after the storm!! Soon after the section has ended the first riff returns. The tracksoon ends and honestly I think this track could be re-worked as there could have easily been another few minutes to the track with a few additional elements which could have enhanced the song. Albeit, the track was superb (if a little rushed?) or maybe I've completely mislead the meaning of the track.
The last track on the disc "Silence & Snow" then opens with a more sombre (and very atmospheric section) which then leads into a riff which could have been featured on "Carpathian Wolves" or "The Celtic Winter" superb! The next riff slows the tempo down a little and the keyboards bring out a fantastic lead melody. The track then does a loop and we return to the first riff, leading into the second. These structures are simple but so effective in their simplicity. As stated time and time again....atmosphere always overrides technical bullshit (at-least in my opinion) Overall a fantastic split which displays two interesting bands from Europe upholding traditional black metal the way it was always meant to sound.

Armatus - Blutvolk - 7'' - Darker Than Black / Final Agony

Armatus' Blutvolk was originally released on tape in 98' by Torment Records.
Since then the tape seems to have been somewhat of a collector's item which seems to have seen folk selling the tape for stupid money. (Shame) since I'm sure this was never Brand/Armatus' intention. The 7'' was re-released in 2016 by DTB and Final Agony and for me it seemed a necessary "evil" to pick this up a few years back.
Side a starts with the first track "The Untouched Throne of Satan" which starts with a loose double kick drum and fuzzed out riff. The vocals are mid ranged and not doing anything we've not heard before. The composition is loose, raw, and much improvised sounding. Brand is apparently playing all instruments on this record which actually displays his spirit for what he does rather than his musical virtuoso. Still, as mentioned before ...Spirt over technical shit. (At-least in my opinion)
The second track "Endless Hate" starts off with (once again) a rather loose double kick and a simple riff. Everything sounds like it's about to fall apart ...which actually adds to the charm of Armatus (even on the other recordings) these recordings are evidentially very sparse and raw. The sound is (once again) very impulsive and raw. Armatus aren't trying to impress the "cool" crowd or the guys who only listen to Abyss studio stuff!! This is black metal from the depths of the underground.
Side b starts with "Armageddon is Here" which starts with a fairly basic riff and some nice vocals. The drums seem a touch more subdued here (somewhat) but the whole recording sounds extremely impulsive and raw. The tracks here are only short yet they seem to contain within them something which displays the purity of black metal. I'm not sure how old Brand was when he made this demo but everything sounds very hateful (Like listening to those old Absurd demos) where the carnality seems to shine through and that "Blutvolk" (where not perfect) could not have happened with fancy or expensive equipment or in some studio wanting hundreds of euros (deutschmark, it would have been back then) albeit, I think the point is made. The last track "Hating Human, Hating Life" starts with a nice riff which invokes an element of old Bathory or Moonblood. This certainly sounds like the best adjusted of the tracks present on the demo. The whole demo may not be the greatest ever put to tape but it display's a band (or project, depending how you look at it) that seems (and seemed) not to care for the great production or scene circus. This is black metal without the drama or dressing up ...without the big production or internet presence.